

You linger like a haunted refrain. Billie sings, and she really did, the girl sleeping under my skin in the most painful way, and never before had I been so deeply, so madly...Maura Fox...destitute brown locks floating for the blistered sky in that fingers through the hair stress action that always created some small effect of heavenly ascension trailed by a sweet scent—the essence, that infectious smell of her—and her voice a little remembrance of Linda Fiorentino, Italian MIB woman hostage to the cockroach, deep thoughtful voice, face carved curved perky nose, sharp chin jutted out in the au natural, resemblance of the beauty of time, toes in the cutest, tiniest way, bundled in those Jesus sandals she walks, 3 steps for my one, quicker and quicker towards expansive experience, small lean body in physics, but a true giant in my eyes bearing that small wonder of pain manifest in that mysterious woman aura, turning all the men in the world seeking to unwind some complex lover and curl up in her, quiet intriguing piercing brown eyes unsettled but settling my soul seeking to just be next to hers—but I'd given up on her in that first summer of my exiled heart, coming off as just another fool in the ranks of mortal men, or that's what I had said to myself, I said "move along ya little man!" after one splattered rain night, walking back from a poetry reading on Broadway:

"Do you want to get some food?"

No!"

Part 1: All Rejections r lies

Get **H**

"I'll pay for you!" Chivalrous me and my wallet, though it's very near empty and always is "I have food at home." Damn! Off Broadway past sterile retro fashion American Apparel with newly cracked windows. The air is getting colder, the rain falling harder. "A chimichanga, I think, half burritos all day."

"Well, that sounds delicious," I say. "Just like the poem that guy read about eating frozen burritos all day."

"Yeah. That was funny."

"But I couldn't tell how full of shit he was though. I couldn't tell..." Walking on with some forgotten worthless bits of talk, I am distracted by our—my—future plans for us, already seeing us months from now coming back here talking of the first night I enchanted her, when finally we are walking past my house.

"Well that was fun," she says, stopping on the corner.

"Yeah...thanks for coming." I now stand awkwardly as she expects me to turn and wave, but instead I make movements a foot ahead of her to the next few blocks that would lead her home.

"Where are you going?"

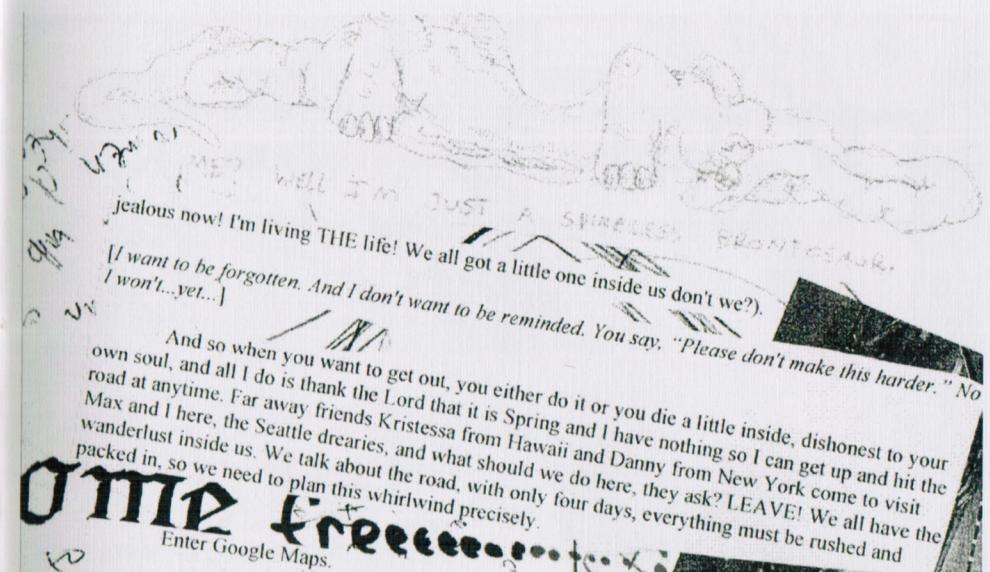
"Um, trying to—walk you home, I'm trying to be a polite person, you know?" The signs are obvious, but my imagination is powerful, it subverts all lame realities. In front of the doorway to her apartment, I let loose my thoughts as if they weren't already said when I gave her all my favorite dum dum lollipop flavors at the start of my romantic night.

"I'm sorry, I just don't feel the same way. I like you as a friend," and something else she says, but under the storm of black night rainy city I hear nothing but, "get home safely," and a forlorn look, she can do nothing for me. Get home safely, it ringing in my steps pounding puddles into a long drive of my legs headed home on the jutted sidewalks and streets—puddle—puddle—puddle—flopping along like a dumb fish half out of water, 18th to 13th is a heavy blur of rocks frothing in my chest. Get home safely, the two o'clock call for closing time when the alcoholic is 15 glasses away from drunken euphoria, Get home safely, the ushering of jets to flight, boats to sea, and I am landlocked left behind.

**dath**

This is my first noble rejection and the rain is everywhere, careening from the skies, laughing derisive the drops applaud each other's work on me, fate is cruel and fuck this place, Seattle!

I really have to get out of here. I got a little travel bug in me growing from that seed of reading, need to know, experience more, live more, and get out, it's eating at me, I feel a little death everyday I wake up to simple sitting, walking two or three blocks to the coffee shop where everyone knows your name, my legs long for a nourishment of movement endured, real travel and a light shift for my headspace from altitude shift or sliding through time zones...but the bug, it's also come from that little child inside me anywhere I go, always fleeing anywhere to anywhere else, running from love that never received, pride never petted, gotta restart again. I want to show her in action, "Hey man! I don't need this bullshit, I'm out!" (or as the great Baloo says, "I'm gone man, solid gone!"). To have the strength to move with an effervescent smile, oh sure I can live a golden life here, there, New York, Boston, San Francisco, Mexicali, Greece, New Zealand, and I can do it without her, without anyone, all by my self (I running, I want out Hollywood style no looking back, into the sunset chuckling, be



And so when you want to get out, you either do it or you die a little inside, dishonest to your own soul, and all I do is thank the Lord that it is Spring and I have nothing so I can get up and hit the road at anytime. Far away friends Kristessa from Hawaii and Danny from New York come to visit Max and I here, the Seattle drearies, and what should we do here, they ask? LEAVE! We all have the wanderlust inside us. We talk about the road, with only four days, everything must be rushed and packed in, so we need to plan this whirlwind precisely.

Itinerary #1: Get to the Grand Canyon. And then...? Kristessa says with reason. Well, that's it, man, Danny and I say. Let us into the canyon!—It's too far and there's nowhere to stay—Well, why can't we camp out? Itinerary #2: Into Utah to the dark sky park, to the billions of stars I've never laid eyes on living in the light littered cities, and THEN to the Grand Canyon. This place is a must, down through California and through the Redwoods, up around back into Seattle. But where will we stay? she says. LET'S BRING A SHITTY TENT! I say. I don't much care about this sleeping detail, I'll sleep anywhere cramped up or sprawled on rocks under cold night it don't matter to me. We can't reach consensus. Kristessa can't see Danny and I's plans as being realistic. We're not realistic when we're together, not at all, it makes us hilarious dreamers we think. We embolden each other, become more of ourselves together (Danny and I a year back visiting Hawaii, biking to the North Shore where our friend Lauren abides, he says, Why does it seem like Lauren talks to us less when we're together?—Yeah I've noticed that too—She wasn't like this when I was hanging out with her the other day, when we went out hiking, it's like she's different when we hang out alone or with other people—No, it's the same with me. I've been thinking about this too, I think she doesn't like it when us two are hanging out together. She gets jealous—She get's jealous?—Yeah man. Yeah..yeah you're right! We're too in-sync with each other for her to keep up—She either wants to be a part of what we got or have us be apart!—We can't let her tear us apart!—Never. Siren woman!—What is she trying to do to us?—Should we just not hang out with her, I mean, why are we even going to her place if she's gonna act all cold and jealous?—Yeah, you wanna just get drunk and explore this neighborhood instead?—But what are we gonna tell her?—I dunno, we got drunk and got lost?—HAhahahaahha...). Our time together has been brilliant since we met trying out for the worship bands in middle school—wandering streets on bikes and in cars and before licenses blasting Blink 182 and trying to make fun of Nelly's Ride With Me, but really just loving it deep down (and always will now due to nostalgia), and other schemes bored at night, getting 10 plus free cups of water at McDonald's, and driving by throw it on douchey school kids running away from bells ringing, a two man job one driver one water caster). Stronger together than without, right? Sleep when you're dead, eh?

Alright then, the plan, yes the plan. Danny and I concede to reason. Itinerary #3, final itinerary: Through Portland, through the Redwoods, to San Francisco, to Modesto. Why there? Danny says. I don't want to go to Methdesio, why in the hell would we go there!—Well, Max's Grandma lives over there and she has a lot of free Petrone, an island of Petrone on a golf course. Then perhaps to Death Valley, and right on back up home.—Then Grand Canyon?—No!—Dammit Why! Alright, alright fine, come on come on let's get the fuck out already...

Look forward to part 2 in this 172 part story, "C, MON"! the most romantic words ever put in specified order.