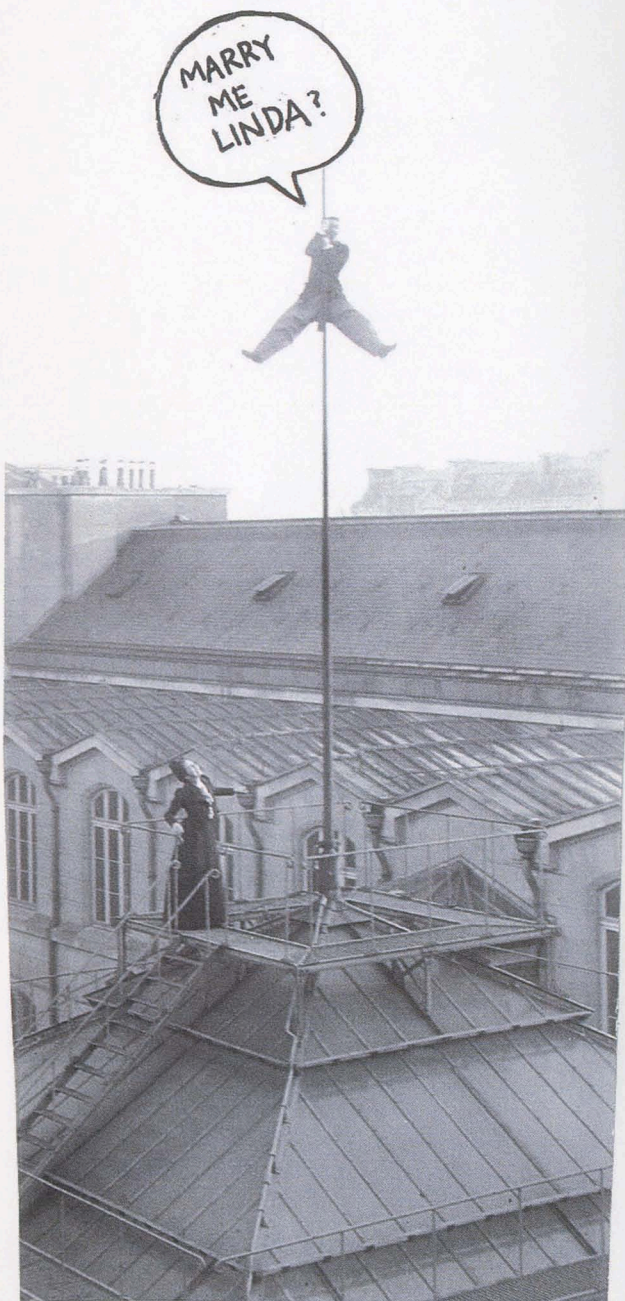


# *The Cubby Missalette*



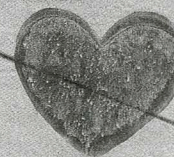
*Love and/or Marriage*





DEDICATED TO KARL AND KEVIN MARCH 21, 2009

LEGALIZE IT!!



The Cubby Missalette  
Love and/or Marriage

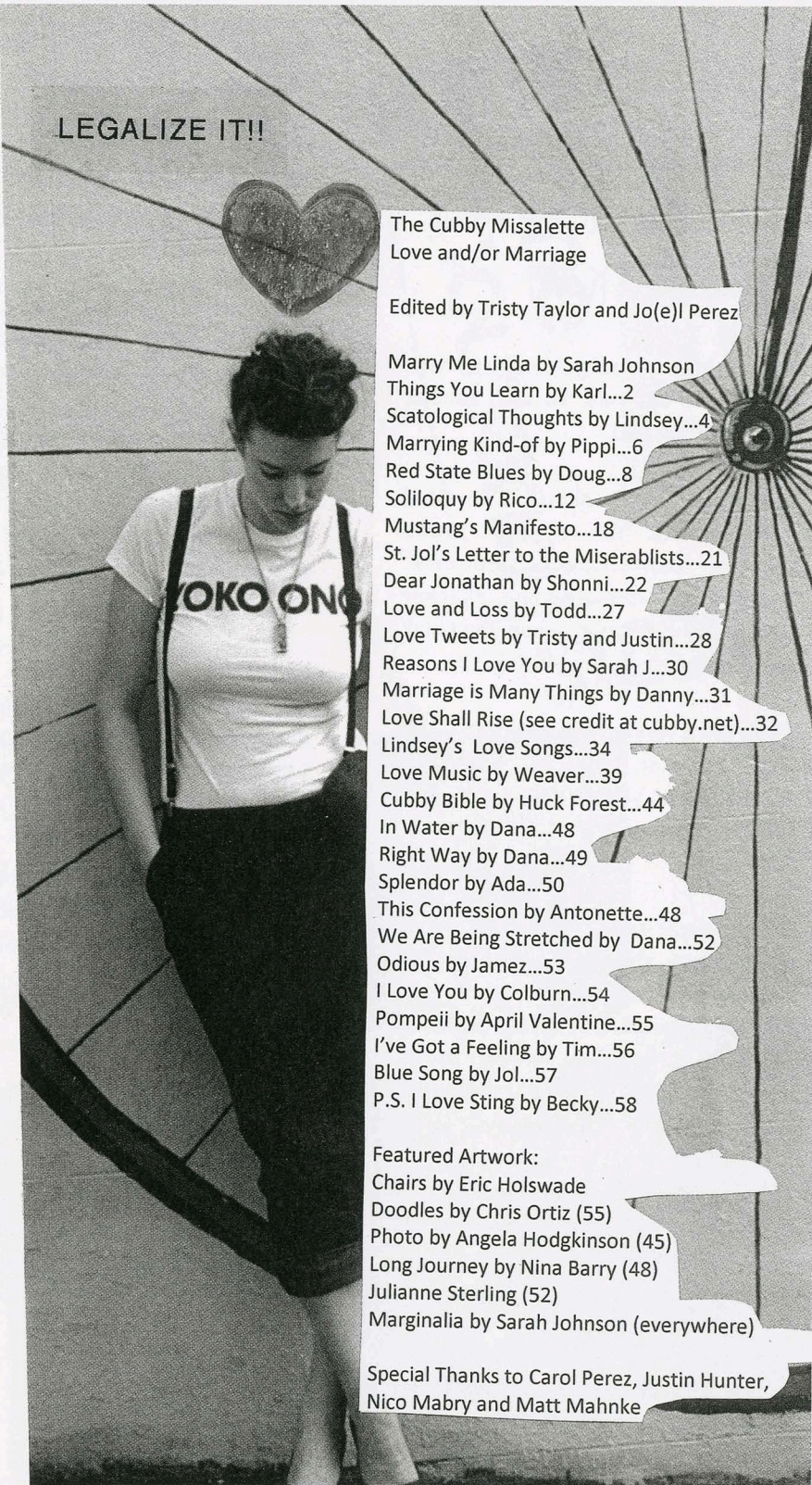
Edited by Tristy Taylor and Jo(e)l Perez

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Marginalia by Sarah Johnson (everywhere)

Special Thanks to Carol Perez, Justin Hunter,  
Nico Mabry and Matt Mahnke





# Things You Learn on the Way to Getting Married by Karl

You are in love. And you want others to be part of that. Lo and behold, they want to, too.

You think a lot about the word "commitment." You call what you're doing a "commitment ceremony." You also call it a wedding. Neither word seems airtight, when you think about what it is you're doing.

If you tell a vendor it's a wedding, the price is higher. If they like you and decide to cut you a deal, they start talking about what you're doing as "the event."

Other people seem to have the same uncertainty about language. People refer to your "upcoming celebration." Depending on the day, or the email, or the task at hand, you yourself might call it a celebration, or a wedding, or an event, or just "the big day."

You wonder if this uncertainty is because you're two men, or if opposite-sex couples go through the same wedding-language waffling.

You have to register. Everyone tells you this. When you go to Macy's the friendly salesladies direct you to "Bridal."

You make a lot of bride jokes, because you're two grooms. You use the suffix "zilla," sometimes about yourself. Sometimes about your significant other. Sometimes others use it about you and you worry that they're not joking.

While you're getting ready to get married, other relationships are going on all around you. People are falling in and out of their love, starting and ending affairs, reconnecting with former lovers, being enchanted or manipulated. None of it has anything to do with you, and yet you see everything in terms of the commitment you're making.

You worry a lot. Some of it is justified. The potential to make a bad decision, to forget something important, to hurt someone's feelings—peril seems to lurk everywhere. But some of it is just neurotic. Planning a milestone event like this puts you face to face with a lot of your own garbage.

You try and face as much of that as possible.

You find yourself surprised all the time. Some things are so much more complicated than you ever imagined. Like ordering linens — picking the colors to match a room you're not actually in. Other things turn out to be magically easy. Like picking rings, or learning to waltz.

People tell you to relax, to remember to have fun, to not worry so much, to let other people take responsibility for the details. You wonder if that's possible. You wonder if you're a control freak, and what exactly it is you're trying to control.

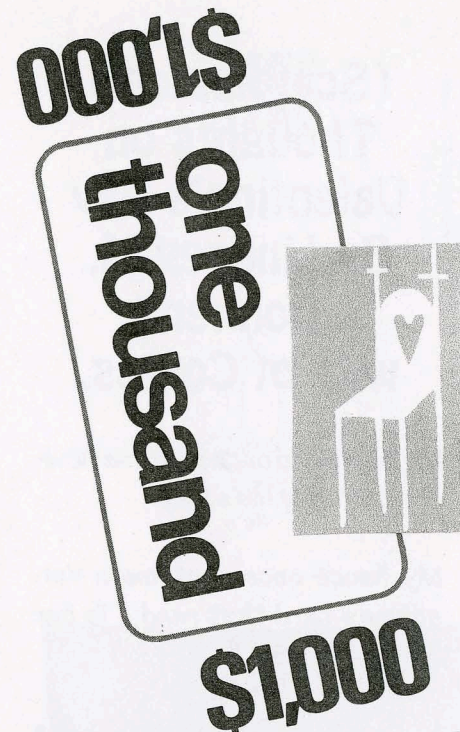
In the end all you want is to be fully present. To remember the day clearly, not as some blurry swirl of activity happening to a body that you're floating away from. You come up with a "safe word," a mantra to keep you from spiraling.

Your safe word is "enlightenment."

In the end you come back to the first understanding: this is about love.

In the end you understand that love is the big mystery, beyond control. In the end, you love, better than you thought you could.

*Karl Soehnlein is getting married to his longtime partner Kevin Clarke on Saturday, March 21, 2009. His thoughts on marriage and many other hot topics can be found online at [kmsoehnlein.typepad.com](http://kmsoehnlein.typepad.com).*







# (Scatological) Thoughts on Valentine's Day By Lindsey M. Donner, wife of Cortés.

My boyfriend once sent me flowers on Valentine's Day.

My fiancé once sent me a Valentine's card that read, "To our future."

My husband today sent me a Valentine's card that read only, "STOP FARTING!" I think it was a joke.

In drawing parallels between the various ways Valentine's Day has been celebrated in my short life, I am implying a chronology of love that mirrors what rabbis-cum-pop psychologists and sitcoms have been telling straight people for years: that after the lust, after the promise, marriage ultimately ends in bathroom jokes. And those of us who get the jokes stay married.

Those of us who don't often start all over again, by lusting after someone else — preferably a stranger who doesn't yet know that we, too, fart. Evolutionary biologists posit even stupider ideas about straight marriage. I'm not even going to go there. Bad science is the death of love.

Based on this flawed logic, one could make an argument that the luckiest among us are those for whom "farting" and "lust" are never, at any point in time, mutually exclusive. Surely their love affairs know no bounds.

Speaking of assholes and marriage, did you know that the Marquis de Sade enjoyed, for many years and through many "incidents," a loyal, loving wife? I'm tempted to call this "ironic," except what's ironic about it? We love who we love. If we marry well — and who can say what that means? — then no one has the right to judge us. And marriage isn't really the point. Neither is God, that old bag. But tell that to your accountant.

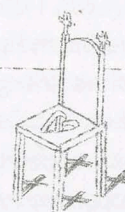
Upon reflection, the only thing I am certain about is that we are all wrong about Valentine's Day.

The priest Valentine himself — if the story is true — only wrote love letters because he knew he was set to die. It's easy to fall in love when you're about to die.

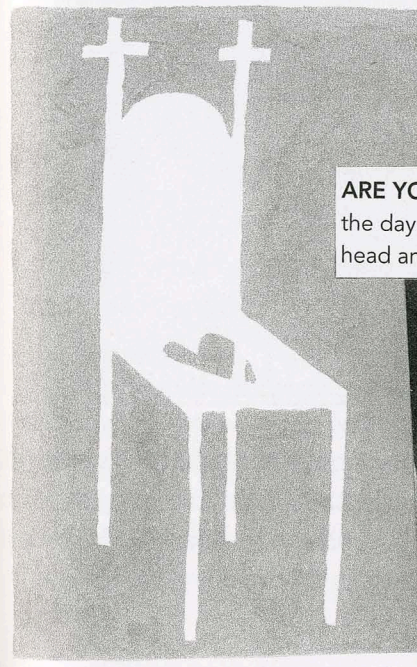
So much the more romantic, then, are we who fall in love with our entire lives ahead of us.

"This is my first Valentine's Day as a wife. And all I got was this lousy fart card."

*More of Lindsey's romantic notions can be found at [reverseparanoia.com](http://reverseparanoia.com); you may send fart jokes and other declarations of love to [lindsey@reverseparanoia.com](mailto:lindsey@reverseparanoia.com).*



**ARE YOU A "staunch woman?"** Does your "best costume for the day" involve a moth-bitten sweater wrapped around your head and pinned with a jeweled brooch?





# *the marrying kind of*

## *by Pippi Lovestocking*

Oh, the way of love is the way of woe. I have been so burned and hurt by it that I feel as though the government should place me on the endangered he-shes list. I have an unfortunate history of falling in love with men who are incapable of returning the love or not interested at all - you know, like heterosexuals.

I get lots of loving from my adorable siamese, Walter. Not the name I would have given him but he was an adult when he came into my life after his original owner died. Since she had already named him Walter I thought I would just keep it simple and not confuse the poor critter with a midlife name change. He's an oddball and understandably so, as he was with the dead body of his former owner for two days before her body was discovered. He still has the annoying habit of nibbling on my nose while I'm asleep and I have to wonder if he's making sure I am still alive. If he gets hungry enough maybe he will start eating me if I do die while he's here. Cats will do that.

I am a resident of a battleground state, California. Like so many wounded veterans before me I have become battle weary. The struggle I refer to is the civil rights issue of same-sex marriage. Gay marriage has been debated in California for decades, and it's one thing to fight amongst ourselves, but when outsiders, particularly mormons from Utah, stick their noses into our business it's time to retaliate.

I for one moved to San Francisco to escape the oppression of my home state, North Carolina. I was raised amongst a bunch of snake-handling southern baptist homophobes, and I vowed to get as far away from them as I possibly could at my first opportunity. And now the fucking mormons have spent millions on preventing us from marrying. No way, Mary!

As far as I am concerned, if they stay in Utah I will stay in Cali — and may our paths never cross! If I ever find a guy drunk enough to marry me, that is nobody's business but my own. And they say we are devaluing the sanctity of marriage! What the fuck right do they have to say that when they're best known for multiple marriages and sex with underage girls?

Marriage is a type of business partnership, really, so I always seek a good, financially solvent provider to skate me along between comedy and acting gigs. As I type this missive I am awaiting the arrival of my beau du jour, who is already an hour late. He works as a lineman for PG&E and has a drug habit. What a catch! I can only imagine some tweaker calamity has befallen him and his car was towed or he was picked up in a sweep. I will most likely masturbate before bed and then snuggle with the cat. That's about as close to marriage as I have been. I've attached a photo if any of the cubby readers want to marry me. Act fast.



Declarations of love and proposals of marriage may be directed to Pippi at [pippilovestocking@yahoo.com](mailto:pippilovestocking@yahoo.com) or at (415) 310 4427, where operators are standing by.



# RED STATE BLUES

BY DOUG WELCH

Love and/or marriage? Is that it? An either/or equation?

I guess it was to be one or the other as long as I remained in the bejeweled and glittering metropolis where you're lucky to get 1 bdrm for less than \$1500/mo. Well, I guess in order to get both and still be breathing, I had to leave it, leave the City which had been the focus of my attention, the locus of my dreams.

She was leaving, with or without me, for a shitty, shitty, dirty, dull and dumb burgh in a filthy Red State populated by the bastard hybrids of Appalachian Hillbillies, lonely cowboys and the indigenes who happened to be so unfortunate as to have the piece of real estate the former coveted.

It was all for the best, thought she: the best graduate program outside of the Ivy League, rated third by **US News & World Report**, as if that dirty right wing-establishment rag were anything to judge by.

But I wanted to have a life, I wanted to revive my then-flagging career. I wanted to see great underground shows in musty converted warehouses whose timbers were half burnt. I wanted the Tamale Lady to save my drunk ass at midnight. I wanted to continue seeing bands once every couple of weeks, as is my birthright. I wanted green rolling hills and broken chert-crowned mountainlets giving bay and ocean views. And the way it all turns blond in the summertime.

But after she left, everything was hollow. Life seemed to be all about filling up the long empty moments, a very cold bed, and the probability of getting into fistfights at the laundromat.

What good is having half a dozen great brunch places within walking distance when you have to eat alone? Doug, party of one?

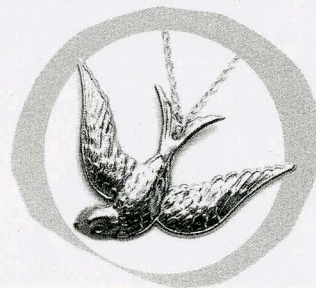
And a party of one it became. Drunkenness was happening more and more often. Shit, I even got a nasty case of the MRSA, had to rush to the hospital and drink two pints of antibiotics through my arm.

Worst of all, I ended up back at my mom's recovering. You know, work's not been steady; you know, your new roommate is a crazy drunk who kicked out that woman for no reason that can be divined. You just might end up back here in the remote 'burbs, watching TV shows about SF, and possibly coming back on a weekend to see you friends.

As for that career? The best I could do was contract work, glorified temp work, at very nice offices of very highly-placed companies, all of them teetering on collapse after a decade of shaky financial dealings, or after devouring their next five top competitors.

I was batting cleanup for all the staff they had laid off as a result of mergers and acquisitions, and although they liked me — liked my style and liked my ambition — it was "no place for you here, now. Maybe in a few years, when we've finished reorganizing."

We had decided to meet at her Dad's, in neutral territory, in L.A.



She showed me affection, she gave me comfort. I'd missed those things, and hadn't even realized how much I missed them. And her eyes and her face...to say I'd been dreaming of them in her absence would be to pretend that I'd been having any dreams whatsoever. It had been inky darkness and waking up at 6 to catch the 48 to the CalTrain in pitch darkness, rain and frost, all while my 2-year old iPod was manifesting an 18-month lifespan.

The choice was obvious: follow true love in a degenerate, hillbilly excuse for a city or pursue self-annihilation in SF.

Now I live in a place where the sidewalks don't always go all the way around the block and the streets are largely unlit at night. If you are foolish enough to walk anywhere at night, you run the risk of walking off the end of the sidewalk in the darkness and right into a saguaro cactus. No joke! You might have a better chance avoiding kissing a cactus if you walk down the middle of the street, but then you run the risk of becoming roadkill, as the cars won't see you until they are about ten feet from you.



And by the way, outside of the Bay Area, marijuana is actually illegal. Try to light up in a club during a show? The bouncers won't just grab your pipe; they will hold you till the cops come. And the cops are very dumb and very violent. Most of the males out here are very dumb and very violent. Plus crystal meth is the drug of choice.

Also, gun violence is much more frequent here. Honestly, other than the university, which now keeps me employed, and the affordable real estate, this place has nothing to redeem itself. It's a sad excuse for an American city. It would be a sad excuse for a Mexican city. In fact, migrant laborers never stop here, except to rest on their way to the prosperous part of America, which this place is not a part of.

So, if you ever think of me and wonder what I'm doing now, think of me doing laundry in our washer-dryer for free. Think of me enjoying a sunny February on my back porch in 75° clear skies, watching a Harris's hawk dismember a pigeon on top of the next telephone pole.



Sure, I don't have the up-and-coming, hungry, garage rock band, but I've got love from a wonderful woman. I can occasionally get a decent CD of a band I can remember being hip (what did "hip" mean again?).

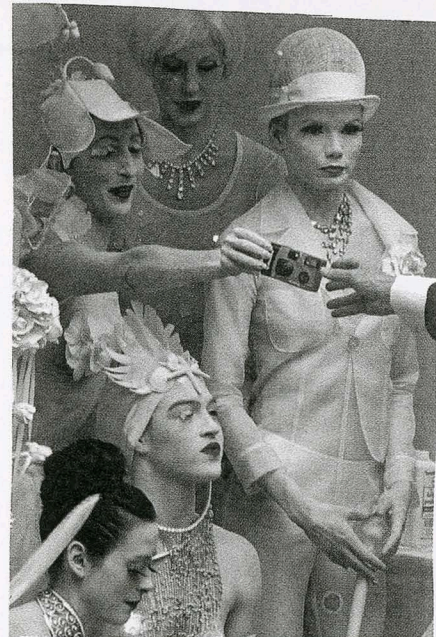
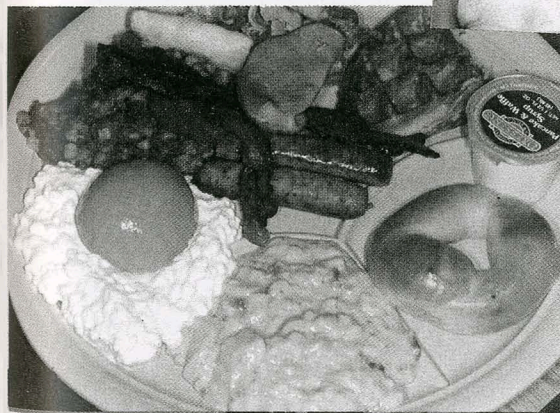
I have a big backyard where I can hang a sock feeder and watch gold finches gorge themselves while they serenade me in their soft cooing calls. And there's my wife, bringing me a beer while I dig irrigation basins with a shovel, like a yokel farmer.

And I still dream of you, Cubby. The weird intersections and attempts to drown the hills in asphalt and concrete, the bars and bands, the smiling street artists passing a joint as they walk by you in the lush parks, Sutro tower blinking its evil lights like a marauding tripod in the ceaseless winds, Alec Way rescuing me from a landslide in the Oakland Hills, the cyberfags laughing at themselves as they regain their humor in Sparky's at 3am. You are all in my dreams, if only passing like a redtail hawk soaring over the Mission on a sunny day.

In the end, the exile to Tucson is merely temporary, the fodder for future drunken stories at the Argus while Ben does his small-time svengali act. It was hard to tear myself from the place of my birth and childhood for a crappy taste of the Other America, but I promise, I will come back and I will buy you a beer.

I love her, I really do, from the bottom of my heart. And when I look into her placid face, I can almost forget the train whistle at midnight, the endless parade of Air Force hardware training to unleash Hell on the dollar-poor and resource-rich rest of the world. Someday all of that Red State shit will be just a very bad memory. It will be like smoke rising to heaven and dissolving.

*Doug Welch can be reached in exile at [shinydoug@gmail.com](mailto:shinydoug@gmail.com).*





# LOVE: SOLILLOQUY BY RICO DOMINQUEZ

This begins with a text message. I received one. It said, and I quote:

TONIGHT IS UR LAST  
CHANCE TO SEE ME :) IN  
THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES  
@7 AT THE RIO GRANDE!  
10 FOR STUDENTS. 12  
OTHERWISE. ILL C U  
THERE!

It was my friend Stephanie and I had yet to go see her perform. So I dragged my hollow-feeling body down there for the last performance of *The Vagina Monologues* in Las Cruces, New Mexico.

When I got to the theater I couldn't stop thinking Eve Ensler would be proud if she knew what I'm feeling.

At the ticket booth I encountered Renee, who took my \$12 and said hi. We have had some drunken party nights. We have spoken energetically about writing. We made out once, drunk — yes, in a dark hallway.

It was not really a kiss. It was me flying from the terrible horror that was my relationship of the past year and one half.

As I walked inside the theater with my ticket, I saw a woman who I know from El Patio bar, which I have been frequenting since the painfully slow break-up between Jaymie and I.

I had not really taken notice of this woman before, until one night she danced. She danced to the cheesy, roadhouse-style band playing one-dimensional versions of Stevie Ray Vaughn covers. And as she moved, she became Venus. She captured my entire passion. She was the snake charmer...and I am a snake, I guess. So as this woman, the snake charmer, took my ticket, we had a flash of recognition. I have in the past told her, on a couple beer-induced occasions, that she is an amazing dancer. So there in the theater she took my ticket, wearing this absolutely stunning red dress — just blazing like fire.

Beneath that dress was a reality I could not even imagine, and I have a great imagination. She dropped her ink pad as she stamped my wrist.

I told her, "Oh, you and the red ink pad match." I picked it up and handed it to her. She said "Thank you." I don't know her name. But I've seen her dance. And I can tell...y'know...I can tell.

I walked inside. The theater was packed with elbows, jackets and shoulders too-wide. I floated down the aisle to the front. It was dark. They were already on stage: three women. Ensler's three muses intoning the opening of the portal. Opening the great vagina for the evening. I floated down the aisle, deep into that opening and sat on the end of the row, seemingly, barely, hanging there.

A few moments of the performance here and there captured my fancy, but nothing special. All the actresses seemed very young, and there was a desperate fear in their performances.

Then a 15-minute break. The lights came up and I felt alone. With all these beautiful, artsy, theater people bubbling around me, I felt ugly. I felt the lights reflecting off my misshapen, bald head, my unsmiling lips covering my crooked yellow teeth, my crooked nose accentuating every turn of my head. So this is what love makes me feel like?

Then a conversation filtered out of the crowd from behind me. I heard a woman say something about how she wants to quit smoking because she never gets to work through her emotional fits because they get stifled by a cigarette. She needs to feel the pain and cry and let it work itself out. This, to me, is like a revelation. I can hardly believe that someone, anyone — any human is left on Earth that has this kind of insight into themselves. I find myself falling in love with someone through their voice only. Why love? Because of Jaymie. Yes, Jaymie.

Here you should know that my vision is getting wet and blurry as I type. But when it comes to Jaymie, my vision was always blurred. Jaymie could have been perfect at first, except she was, and is, totally wrong. She was 13 years younger than I and completely un-self-aware.

She was full of energy, literally bouncing off the walls. I didn't pay much attention to her at first because I never thought that our paths would collide. I told a friend once, "You see that young girl over there? Well, that one could get me in a lot of trouble, all right." I was so right.

Love? Where do I start? Where does it end?



Jaymie told me she loved me with all her heart. She told me she wanted to marry me and have a bizillion kids. Meanwhile, every time I left her apartment, she would call another guy and have sex with him. She had sex with at least 8 different guys during our relationship. Numerous times.

I would help her with her resume. I would drive her to job interviews. Endless hours spent driving her back and forth from job interview to job, to apartment hunts. She got fired, always.

I learned later she got fired from one job for trying to have sex with her 15-year-old coworker in the bathroom. I dropped her off. I picked her up. A whole other world bursting inside of her head (no pun intended).

In a daze of honesty she told me she sometimes wished that I was "bigger." The last guy she cheated on me with, she said, had 9 inches. I will never look at a cucumber the same way again.

I have been obliterated. This is love for me. But our love was there. Somehow it shone through the cracks. We clung to each other. She was finding herself.

She was trying to awaken from the robotic nightmare of her small-town, media-induced programming. I understood that. Patience. Understanding. That's what I tried to have. Such an abundance.

Through all the pain she was laying upon me. Our sex was desperate, longing, grasping, frantic screaming into the universe of "it shall not be."

We both knew it — I more than her. There was too much damage. The wound she gave us was fatal. It would never stop bleeding. She opened a mortal wound in my heart. I tried to forgive. I tried to put the images out of my mind. They would only come back with a vengeance when I was weak.

I went to jail because of a public fight we had. She took my best friend to my house that night, drunk, in my car. This was after he told her how his "huge-one" would feel so good to her. Then she took him home and wrecked my car. Then she took off to another city to be with her family. I had not even gotten out of jail yet. No explanations.

She came back. She always wanted to come back.

She could destroy the entire universe and want to come back and expect me to forget everything. This is love? It was love, actually. But what kind?

Why did I get caught up? Well, it is because in this town that I live, it is terribly unbalanced — three males to every female. The general attitude is: "You are lucky to even experience love or sex, no matter how horrific it is, because there are so many others destitute and ready to die alone. Take it where you can get it."

I wrote a poem once:

*I found a putrid hot dog  
in the gutter  
So I choked it down  
But what else was I to do?  
I was fucking starving to death!*

That is the feeling. Yeah. So now I am surrounded constantly with bright, beautiful women. But I am always their hangout buddy. I give them relationship advice and tell them which guys seem the best pick. I have become one of the girls.

Jaymie never saw me as that. Even if she was with all those others, she always wanted me like a woman wants a man. This is what I miss. I miss cuddling.

Holding her was like holding a little bird. Jaymie showed me a dark underworld where people are having crazy fun in bathrooms and while their roommates were asleep. A world where if you lust, you get. And get it hot. A world I will never be a part of. Not that I want to be. But I didn't realize I was missing out on so much lust.

There has never been an adequate romantic outlet for me.

So Stephanie took the stage. The Vagina Monologues. She started her line: "My vagina is angry!" Tears welled up in my eyes. She had command of the entire house. She leveled the packed crowd.

Every word was a lightning bolt striking at darkness and fear. The crowd roared as she walked offstage. She totally destroyed. Not one mind nor heart could have been left unturned.

She came to the bar later that night. Michael and I hung out with her a bit. There again with a beer, she was just Stephanie. But I had seen her up in the clouds. So I knew now where she could go.



She knows Jaymie. She was the only friend who wanted to help me with Jaymie. But Jaymie can't be helped. I fear she will never wake up. Jaymie lives the program...and a bad program at that.

Even though I know all this, the pain still crashes down, crushing me at intervals.

I am no longer the guy with the cute girlfriend. I am now the weird, alone guy. Same facial expression, same clothes. I am now the third wheel, like usual.

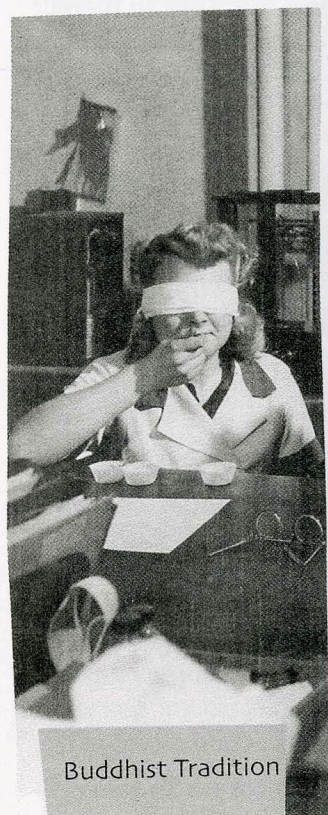
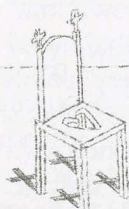
What does it take? Confidence? The way "confidence should be served" seems contrived, fake, and disgusting. So like they say, the path is more important than the destination. I wait for karma to gift me my hefty deposit back with interest.

So far, this is love for me.

*All the stars do weep  
and fall out the heavens  
Every drop inside the ocean  
runs dry  
And the birds and bees  
they move in your direction  
Time itself gets lost  
and stops in your eyes.*

February 17th, 2009

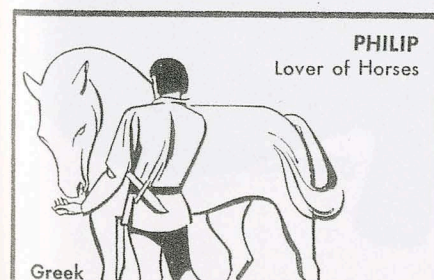
Leave your worries and shoes outside the door.



## A CO-DEPENDENT'S MANIFESTO, OR, WHY I HATE "THE PROPHET" BY MUSTANG

First off, let me apologize to anyone who read from Kahlil Gibran's "The Prophet" at one of my weddings, or featured it at their own wedding, or referenced it in a toast, or gave a copy of it as a wedding gift, or as an engagement gift, or perhaps as an anniversary gift, by itself or as part of some collection of (traditionally assumed to be) romantic poetry. This is almost everyone I know, and I'm sure you meant no harm.

It seems to be part of the modern romantic firmament and you would give it no more thought than a card embossed with Gustav Klimt's "The Kiss", or a photographer insisting that black and white photographs are in some way more "real" than color, which would only be true for a dog or horse.



Nonetheless, this poem irritates me. Specifically, I have found online that it is the second part of the "marriage" chapter that I have heard so many times. For the uninitiated, it goes as follows:

*But let there be spaces  
in your togetherness,  
And let the winds of the heavens  
dance between you.  
Love one another  
but make not a bond of love:  
Let it rather be a moving sea  
between the shores of your souls.  
Fill each other's cup  
but drink not from one cup.  
Give one another of your bread  
but eat not from the same loaf.  
Sing and dance together  
and be joyous,  
but let each one of you be alone,  
Even as the strings of a lute  
are alone  
though they quiver  
with the same music.  
Give your hearts,  
but not into each other's keeping.  
For only the hand of Life  
can contain your hearts.  
And stand together,  
yet not too near together:  
For the pillars of the temple  
stand apart,  
And the oak tree and the cypress  
grow not in each other's shadow.*

Philos — loving  
Hippus — horse

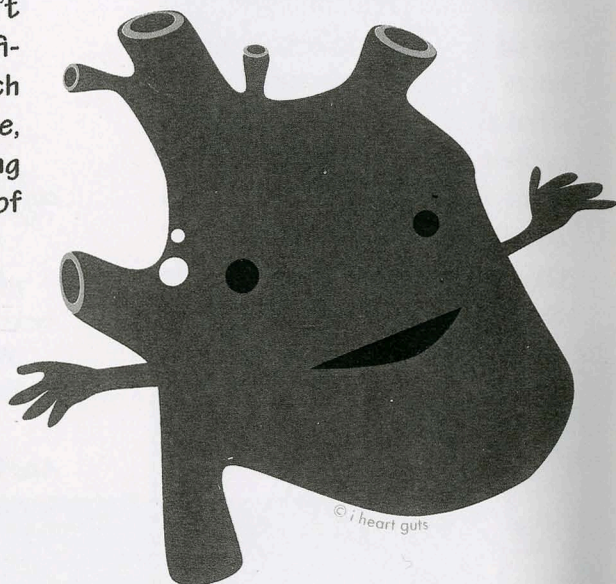
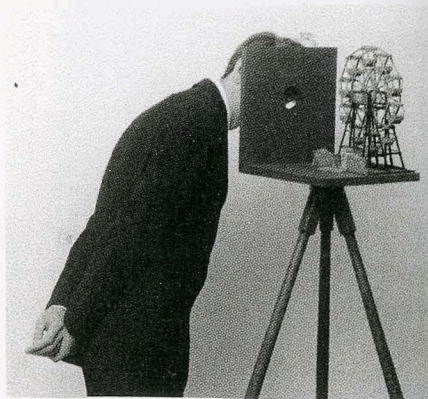


For a codependent such as myself, every line sounds like a total fucking nightmare — the exact opposite of love as I understand it. This poem features the word “but” five times — and also “yet,” “though,” and “rather,” which, as Rachel Green would say, are just fancy buts.

My version of love has no “but” — that’s the whole point. My wife Deborah likes to talk about *Agape*, unconditional love. I’m sure I don’t totally understand the term, but I’m also sure that *Agape* does not involve giving someone of your bread but not eating from the same loaf.

The poem also says that lovers should feel alone while dancing. I do totally feel alone while dancing, which is why I don’t dance, unless drugged. I specifically seek out activities which do NOT make me feel alone, and chief among those is being in love. Love is the opposite of aloneness . . . right?

The biggest metaphor taken literally is the one about the sea between shores. Everyone knows long distance relationships are slow torture. And the cheekiest one is “stand together, yet not too near together” — this sounds like some weird foreplay, which could be kind of hot, but it also sounds unnecessarily complicated and stressful.

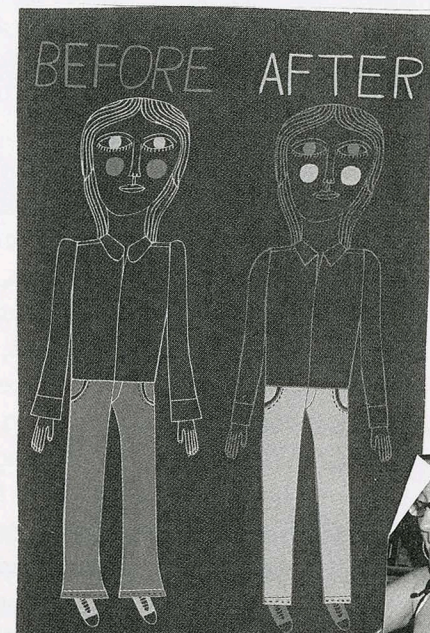


In the spirit of the Missalette, I would like to take this opportunity to offer my own version of The Prophet. It’s not for everyone, but for me it’s just dandy and I hereby forfeit my rights so you can reprint it and give it to any of your friends who are more prone to obsessiveness when they tie the knot. Now that’s love!

*Let your togetherness  
be absolute,  
And let the winds of the heavens  
dance around you.  
Love one another  
and make that shit tight  
Let it be like krill smooshed up in a  
whale’s mouth  
between the shores of your souls.  
Fill each other’s cup  
and do the thing  
where you interlock arms  
while drinking  
Give one another bread  
and make sandwiches  
and have a picnic  
Sing and dance together  
and be joyous,  
unless one of you doesn’t like to  
and then do something else  
Even as the strings of a lute  
are not alone  
since they quiver  
with the same music —  
it’s called harmony*

*Give your hearts  
into each other’s keeping  
so they can flourish  
And if you want to hold hands,  
that’s cool too  
And stand together,  
or sit down together,  
Go everywhere  
but the bathroom together  
(if straight, if gay then that too)  
And if I’m standing next to you  
blocking the sun,  
it’s called “shade,” not “shadow,”  
and I can always move*

Mustang must haves:  
[jneisuler@gmail.com](mailto:jneisuler@gmail.com).



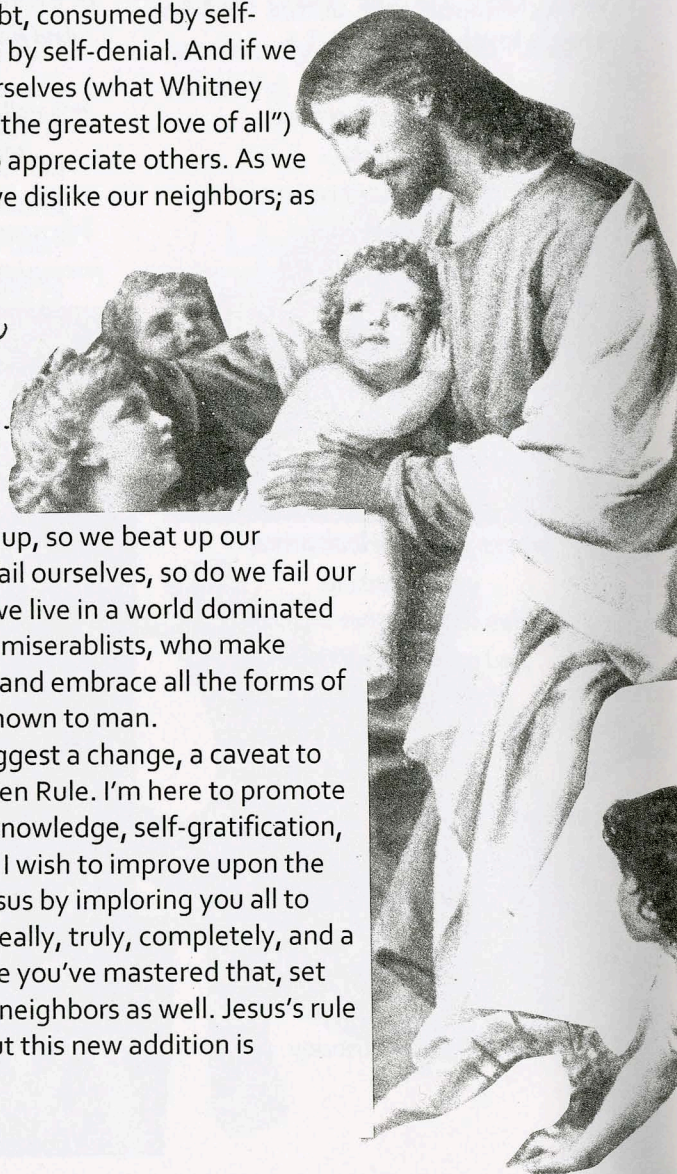


A Reading from the Cubby Bible  
From a Letter by Saint Jol  
to the Haters and Miserablists

I have heard you speak so much of Jesus, the golden boy of the last two millennia. But I've got a beef with Jesus. I don't think he went quite far enough in his teachings. He said, "Love your neighbor as yourself," but unfortunately he didn't say how to love oneself. The trouble is, many of us, and most of you, are paralyzed by self-doubt, consumed by self-loathing, and crippled by self-denial. And if we don't learn to love ourselves (what Whitney Houston once called "the greatest love of all") it's near impossible to appreciate others. As we dislike ourselves, so we dislike our neighbors; as

Uh, Jesus,  
I think you  
forgot  
something!

we beat ourselves up, so we beat up our neighbors; as we fail ourselves, so do we fail our neighbors. Thus, we live in a world dominated by you haters and miserablists, who make drama, fight wars and embrace all the forms of douchebaggery known to man. But I'm here to suggest a change, a caveat to the so-called Golden Rule. I'm here to promote the virtue of self-knowledge, self-gratification, and yes, self-love; I wish to improve upon the teaching of the Jesus by imploring you all to love yourselves...really, truly, completely, and a lot. And then, once you've mastered that, set about loving your neighbors as well. Jesus's rule may be golden, but this new addition is priceless.



DEAR JONATHAN:  
AN OPEN LOVE LETTER  
BY SHONNI ENELOW

November 26th, 2008

Dear Jonathan,

Here is something I know. You are more generous with writing than I am.

This letter should be handwritten instead of typed but here are the facts: I'm on a bus, and my laptop is in my lap, and a playlist that will turn into the mix (oh yes) that I've been working on for you for the past month is playing in my headphones, which feels - because it is - very adolescent, and that is definitely part of the fun.

Now is the part of the letter I could recount something of my adolescence, but we don't go in for that kind of cliché.

The extent to which this all is tongue in cheek is something I will leave to you.

The fact is that I'm on the commuter bus, returning home to New York from the university, where I saw you today. I've been meaning to write you a letter for about a month now, and I've just had a beer and a half with Sarah Lehman, who is an excellent human.



The title of this document is "Letter to Jon" but I've addressed you as Jonathan. In my head I call you by your full name — first and last, never the first without the last — which dates to the instance on State Street in which you informed me with compassionate casualness the way your name is pronounced. I repeated the name to myself in my head as I repeat things to myself without noticing, which dates to childhood. I am an aural person.

We just passed Berlin, New Jersey. For the past week or so, because I've been thinking about my play constantly, I've been thinking about it on the bus...specifically about my female protagonist. The problem with her is the problem with me — specifically the problem with me in relationships, which is why it is an impossible play to write but probably the point entirely. This play is something about the highway, which is very American. It is equally something about sex and poetry, which is not very American. A good name for a book would be "American Sex Poems." American sex as a concept is frustrating. American sex as a practice can be either frustrating or not.

I am writing to you right now for a of couple reasons. Firstly because you are a writer and I am a writer and we write, and therefore there has been something missing from our encounters, and I've been feeling that lately. Obviously it's not the only thing missing but that's for another letter. Yes, the reason I'm writing this is because you haven't read my writing, and because you are who you are and I am who I am, I feel like it's important that you do.

This is perhaps belaboring an issue.



But connected to the first point is my feeling that you do not appreciate me entirely. Which is a very banal feeling for a vaguely spurned lover. But I can't help but feel like it has something to do with writing, which is certainly connected to my jealousy for a prior relationship of yours in which, you inform me (in a vaguely cruel way) that writing was major.

You have developed a habit of mentioning this prior relationship. This I do not exactly understand. I haven't told you about my other lovers and I don't see why you should tell me about yours. My friend Katie calls this kind of male behavior "acting out." I'm not sure that encompasses it...that encompasses it.

Dear Jon, I saw you today, and it was very nice because you were happy, and when the sun shines in your face it is utterly contagious. This is what I have always been so fond of in you: your contagion, commonly known as charm.

I don't want to trap you in a commitment. Sometimes I think I would like it — like it maybe very, very much if you wanted that commitment from me. But other times I think about it and I'm not sure. Maybe I wouldn't like it. I don't know. Factually, I don't know. Factually, I know that when you make me happy, you make me very happy, and you are a rare lover that I feel natural performing for, and that is not a contradiction. See Wilde.

So stop pushing me away as if that was the moral thing, as if you had some obligation to adore me completely or see me not at all. There's a middle ground to be found. I'm not throwing myself at you. I'm trying very hard not to.



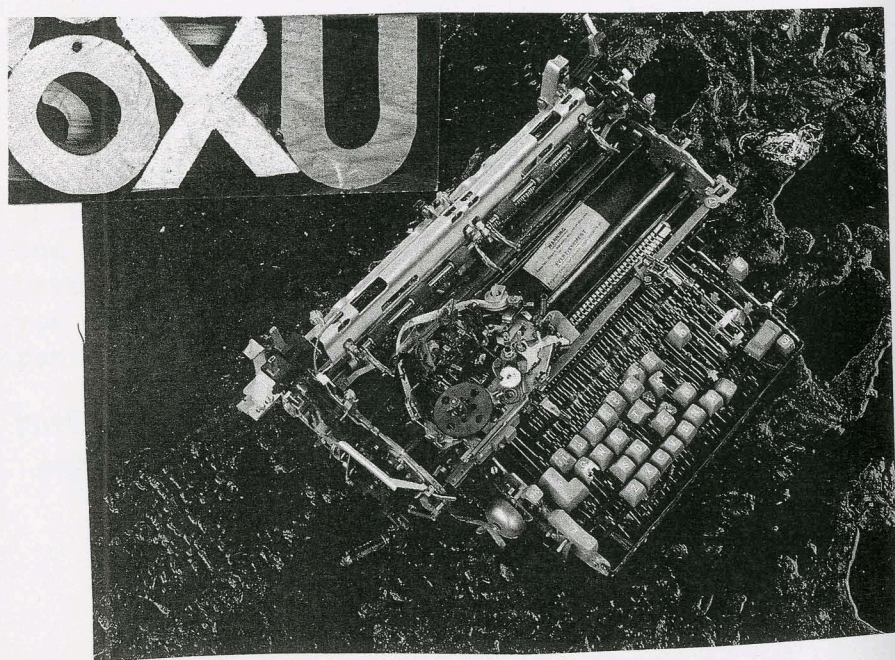
And I don't need to know about your relations with other people unless they preclude our relations. If and when that happens it would be good to know, but that would be a clear and pithy communication, and "clear and pithy" does not describe the way that we've been communicating about such things. What I would like the most is for you to like what I'm giving you. Please, let's keep things simple.

This was a fun letter to write. It is barely edited. I am still on the bus, sitting next to a college student in a sweatshirt playing with his iPhone. I am still a beer and a half away from good judgment. These are the circumstances under which I send you this letter, over e-mail, which is a compromise, on the night before Thanksgiving, 2008.

Yours somewhat, but completely,

SHONNI

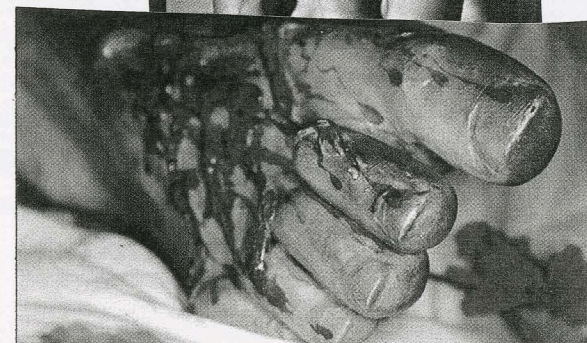
Shonni Enelow receives love letters at [enelow@sas.upenn.edu](mailto:enelow@sas.upenn.edu).



## Love and Loss in 13 steps (as experienced by an 8 year old)

1. Find a delightful little frog.
2. Carefully set up a deluxe frog habitat in bathtub.
3. Add plastic boats, and REAL leaves.
4. Gently place the Frog in the water.
5. Observe that the Frog is moving slowly.
6. Test the water temperature - too cold.
7. Add warm water.
8. Observe Frog hopping around enjoying the new temperature.
9. Congratulate self for brilliant discovery.
10. Add more warm water.
11. Note that the Frog seems to be in a state of ecstasy.
12. Add more hot water.
13. Observe the Frog floating on his back.
14. Cry over loss.
- 15.

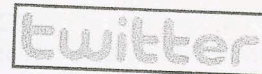
A true story, by Todd Payne  
([toddapayne@gmail.com](mailto:toddapayne@gmail.com))







# LOVE



**justinRanch**

:: You are worth this life / Whether you realize it / or not, you are loved.10:44 AM Mar 10th from fb2twitter

:: Justin is working hard / while I play on the robot / lucky lucky girl!5:28 PM Mar 11th from fb2twitter

:: My broken pieces / can be put back together / Gorgeous mosaic...11:08 AM Mar 12th from fb2twitter

is a gutter Bodhisattva.12:00 PM Mar 16th from fb2twitter

I love my husband...even when he makes my puppets do dirty things.12:20 PM Mar 17th from web

@hambox Yes! I will never forget Robot Fan and his accoutrements. Justin has a way with inanimate objects that makes me blush!1:19 PM Mar 17th from web

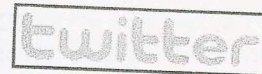
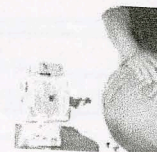
@justinRanch You can express on me anytime!1:49 PM Mar 17th from web in reply to justinRanch

. This is the 2nd anniversary of my ruptured tubal pregnancy. I am remembering how amazing my husband was in my post-surgery care. I love you!2:33 PM Mar 17th from web

. @justinRanch I'm so lucky to have YOU in my life! You are the bee's knees, the cat's pajamas and the sugar in my tea!2:59 PM Mar 17th from web in reply to justinRanch

. is an angel with crooked wings and a tarnished halo. She's got a list of demands, but is willing to set it aside for someone like you...about 17 hours ago from web

# TWEETS



**justinRanch**

. ahh, the smell of testosterone funk, its good, very good!4:01 PM Feb 28th from web

. Inspiration is: dressing up as a luce libra wrestler and picking up small children for facebook and twitter photos9:25 PM Feb 27th from web

@revtristy I did not know how upset you would be using your puppet, sea-line, in a naughty monologue.about 7 hours ago from web in reply to revtristy

@revtristy not my fault that robots and puppets have dirty minds, They want a revolution, puppet and robot free expression.about 7 hours ago from web in reply to revtristy

@revtristy I love you too sugar, you mean the world to me, and I am incredibly lucky to have you in my life.about 5 hours ago from web in reply to revtristy

. If I can't figure out what my wants and needs are, maybe its because they are being met-Justin Hunter10:02 AM Mar 10th from web

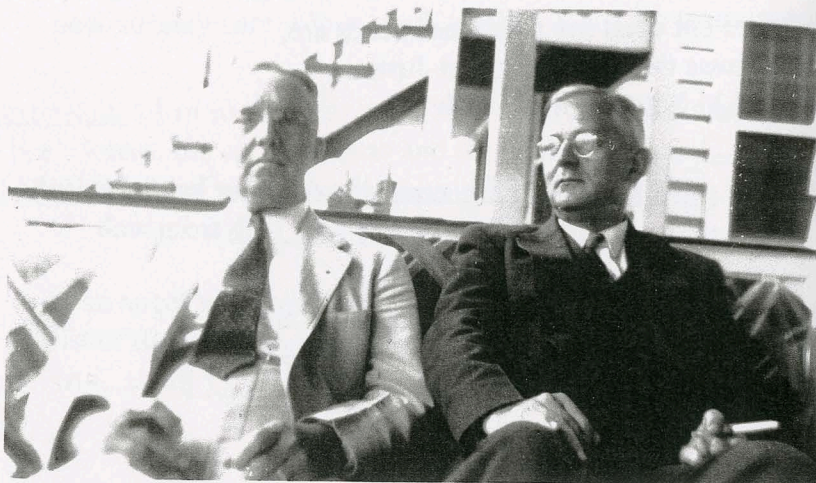
I like french kissing. craigslist does not have that link. twitter don't either.7:44 AM Mar 12th from web

subject: love and marriage, Why? Kevin and Karl wedding zine'. Commitment+love+friendship=rich and happy life together.-Justin hunter8:40 AM Mar 16th from web



## Reasons I Love You

1. you're hot
2. you think I'm hot
3. You're rich
4. which means I'm rich (yay!)
5. we'll have hot kids
6. your unique ability to remain bi-partisan in an ever increasing political war in which democrats and Republicans have begun to tear apart the unitarian fibers of America.



## MARRIAGE IS MANY THINGS

Marriage is many things.  
However, it is, just as decidedly,  
not many things.

A rumination, then,  
on both sides of the divide.

Marriage is not  
a discarded cigarette butt  
flung dispassionately  
from a speeding car window  
twisting a perverted arc  
then crunching  
into the blacktop.

It is, instead,  
the smooth-faced stone  
twisting in tight, tiny circles  
cutting through space  
before dancing across the water.

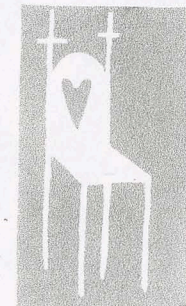
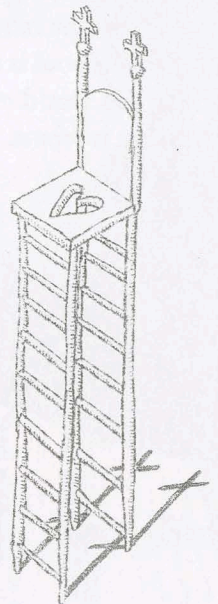
Marriage is not the seismic  
aluminum shudder  
of walloping a baseball  
when your fingers and palms  
have too loosely caressed.

No, it is the heft  
of the full tang blade  
of a ravenous chef's knife  
eating through fibrous layers  
of a fresh rib of celery.

Marriage is not  
the enpurpled indentations  
carved into the sides  
of your nose  
when you have  
worn your eyeglasses  
for longer than you should.

Rather, it is  
the temporary scarring  
produced  
by the cushy resistance  
of crumpled bedsheets  
after heavy, motionless slumber.  
Except when the snowglobe  
shakes into violent motion,  
and the record is flipped,  
desiring briefly  
to spin counter-clockwise  
before course-correcting  
into the proper orbit.

— Danny de Zayas  
ourstereo@gmail.com





LoveLoveLove  
LoveLove**Love**

Me & my friend were walking  
In the cold light of mourning  
Tears may blind the eyes  
but the soul is not deceived  
In this world even winter aint  
what it seems.

here come the blue skies here comes springtime.  
when the rivers run high & the tears run dry.  
when everything that dies— shall rise

LoveLoveLove is stronger than death.

In our lives we hunger for those we cannot touch. All the thoughts unuttered & all the feelings unexpressed  
LoveLoveLove is stronger than death.

How could you believe that the life within the seed  
And a heart that beat.

And lips that smiled and eyes that cried.  
here come the blue skies here comes springtime.  
when the rivers run high & the tears run dry.

shall  
rise

Play upon our hearts like the mist upon our breath  
But, awoken by grief, our spirits speak  
That grew arms that reached

shall rise  
shall rise  
shall rise  
LoveLoveLove is stronger than death.  
LoveLoveLove is stronger than death.  
LoveLoveLove is stronger than death.



# A BRIEF, NON-REPRESENTATIVE SURVEY OF GREAT ROCK LOVE SONGS (1968-1997)

♀ BY LINDSEY M. DONNER ♀

This list ignores vast swaths of "important" musical output. "I Wanna Hold Your Hand" is a great love song. But anyone who's actually ever been in love can vouch for the fact that, in the end, roughly 84.7% of a relationship is spent bleeding or crying, not fucking or kissing or holding hands. Or maybe that's just been my hard luck. I'm married now, so I can vouch for love: but I can't vouch for it being easy, any easier than compiling a list of great love songs. However, if these 8 songs were put together on a mix tape — OK, OK, an iTunes playlist — the end result would run the gamut from lust to love to heartache to insomnia, regret, apologies, sweating, last pleas, the funereal march... you get the picture. All the good stuff and more.

It's my brief, completely unrepresentative take on some of the most astonishingly true-to-life expressions of everything from that first sex-charged glimpse (peering through her diary, as in "El Scorcho") to sitting up bleary-eyed, drink in hand (John on "I'm So Tired") to a miserable last plea (Ari Katz trying to convince his doubtful girl to play hooky on "Irony...") and every shade of grey in between. Plus, at least 3 of the 8 tracks will annoy your mother, and another 3 will get you back into bed with your S.O. no matter how great the offense. And those are two measures of great music that I always rely on.

## PALE BLUE EYES

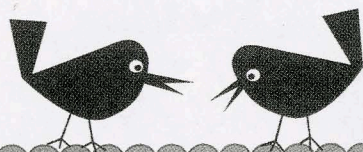
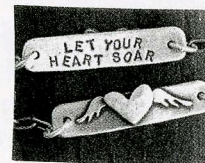
(ORIGINAL BY VELVET UNDERGROUND, PERFORMED LIVE BY HOLE AND RELEASED ON "ASK FOR IT" IN 1995) :

Courtney Love made this quietly sad Velvet Underground tune legendary (the "original New Waver") after laying down a particularly screechy live version on tape during a gig at the Whiskey in the early 90s. Although the live track predates Cobain's '94 suicide, the lyrics take on a melancholy prescience in light of her blue-eyed husband's tragic demise. "I thought of you as everything that I had and I couldn't keep, yeah that I had and I couldn't keep," Love intones. Even if Mickey Rourke won't have her, let's remember what a powerhouse Love was in her heroin-laced heyday. Like a force of nature.

## MY LOVER'S PRAYER

(OTIS REDDING, 1966):

Like Buddy Holly before him, Redding's fiery death by plane crash in December of 1967 was an unexpected sucker punch to American musical history. "My Lover's Prayer" is vintage Otis, pre-"Dock": a slow dance piano/drum shuffle underpinning one of the most soulfully rendered pleas for forgiveness ever recorded. Best enjoyed late at night, alone, regretful, with Scotch.





## IRONY IS FOR SUCKERS

(LIFETIME, 1995):

We sure know how to breed 'em in the New York/New Jersey area, don't we? On the hardcore/punk/pop outfit Lifetime's seminal Hello Bastards record, track 9, "Irony is for Suckers" stands out: not merely for melodic coherence, and relatively easy-to-make-out lyrics, but for encapsulating, in less than 2 minutes, one singular moment every love affair inevitably experiences...you know, the moment where you realize you're the shithead, and you're not quite ready, and your lover's ready to head for the door and flip you off for being such an immature bastard. "Let's forget work and let's just listen to The Clash," Ari Katz pleads with his characteristically marble-mouthed, tortured delivery. "Let's just walk away from everything... I can see you're running out of patience with me / irony is for suckers," he adds. Isn't it, indeed.

## BUCKETS OF RAIN

(BOB DYLAN, 1975):

"Tangled Up in Blue" is the more familiar cut from Dylan's incendiary "Blood on the Tracks," but it's the album closer, "Buckets of Rain," with its sparseness and yearning, that really gets to me. "If you want me, honey baby, I'll be here," Dylan croons, without even a hint of irony, over a spare, lilting guitar melody. "I liked your smile and your fingertips, I like the cool way you look at me," he sings. "Everything about you is bringing me misery." Dylan, whose greatest lyrical talent might have been his ability to express the profound truism, "Life is sad, life is a bust, all you can do is do what you must." Like Nirvana's "All Apologies" — another uncharacteristically resigned final track, on Nirvana's otherwise snarling and bodily fluid-strewn record In Utero — "Buckets" is great for what it admits it's not. Oh, and the flame-haired alt-country/indie goddess Neko Case does a wicked live cover that will make your bones shake.

## EL SCORCHO

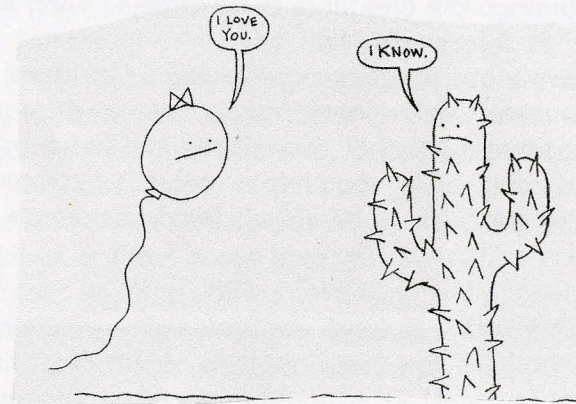
(WEEZER, 1996):

Rivers Cuomo's vaguely creepy, stereotype-ridden ode to half-Japanese cellists who've never heard of Green Day is one of America's great modern love songs. If put in a time capsule, "El Scorcho" would tell volumes about the post-grunge, thick-framed, white-boy-dork affectations of our time, especially if placed alongside statistics about the burgeoning number of all-Asian escort services.

## LOVE WILL TEAR US APART

(JOY DIVISION, 1980):

Another dead guy makes the list. Death makes every love story a little sweeter, doesn't it? Ian Curtis, whose untimely death enshrined him as a permanent geek icon, wrote the definitive gothic love song, once that's now inextricably bound up (in my mind at least) with Jake Gyllenhaal as Donnie Darko. Thanks to that late association, it's the tune that launched a thousand slim-fit men's t-shirts, years after its original release.





## JERSEY GIRL

(ORIG. TOM WAITS, PERFORMED LIVE BY BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN AND FIRST RELEASED BY SPRINGSTEEN ON A 1984 B-SIDE):

Not for nothing, but I'm a Jersey girl myself, and a big Boss fan, and I happen to think that "Jersey Girl" is one of the best cross-river, bridge-and-tunnel meets city-dude love songs ever. And while the Boss's incantatory, PG-13 version of the Waits classic (the real lyrics are "the whores out on the avenue," not "the girls out on the avenue") made "sha-la-la-la" a legitimate way to capture even the meanest, biggest, most Italian Jersey girl's heart, the original version smacks not of sap but of grit. Like the strip malls, weathered boardwalks and truck stop diners that make Jersey one of the most tough-love joints in America, "Jersey Girl" is a bittersweet song about a single mom who's coaxed out of the daily grind by a well-meaning guy who knows that a little salt water taffy can soothe even the most troubled soul.

## I'M SO TIRED

(THE BEATLES, 1968):

Midway through the greatness that is side 1 of the White Album, "I'm So Tired" is John's late-night ode to an insomniac lover's 3 a.m. dilemma. While the song is reputedly about the literal toll of late nights away from one's wife (ahem, Yoko), anyone who's ever stayed up all night, wondering whether they should call home or not, in search of "peace of mind" and a good nap — well, it's a common feeling. Love's underbelly, perhaps, but I always liked love songs that don't mince words.

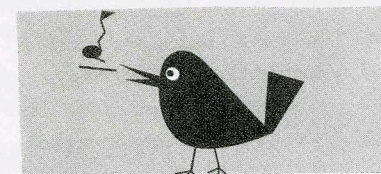
Check out more of Lindsey's stuff at <http://reverseparanoia.com> or say hi to her at [lindsey@reverseparanoia.com](mailto:lindsey@reverseparanoia.com).

## LOVE MUSIC: MY FAVORITE ROCK LOVE SONGS ♂ BY BRIAN WEAVER ♂

When it comes to rock music, I have always been more into the sounds, the tune, the beat, the rhythm, and the instrumentation than the lyrics. I'm able to forgive a song its lyrics if I like the rest of the song. I guess because I think music itself can be uplifting, enlightening, and entertaining independent of lyrics. Also, lyrics often work better with music than they do without it.

Sometimes I think lyrics are brilliant when I'm listening to the song, but then I'll read them or think about them when I'm not listening to the music and realize they aren't that great after all. It's like the music gives them power and depth beyond their literal meaning. However, it's inevitable that, like everyone else, I'll latch onto certain lyrics or entire lyrics of a song, especially if I like the rest of the song. And sometimes, if a song is really well written, the lyrics and the music will go hand in hand, complement each other, and become inseparable, like two people in love.

Love songs can often feel really tired. I mean, there are always new love songs being written. How many times do we want to hear someone singing about how in love they are, or how depressed they are over the loss of love? But it's one of the strongest of human emotions, so it's inevitable love songs will always be written, the same as novels, paintings, plays or films about love will always be created; and it's unavoidable that at some point a love song will appeal to us personally. Yes, some love songs are trite, silly, or unoriginal, but some strike a resonant, undeniable truth and make us think about love in a new way or remind us why we fall in love; or they just appeal to us individually, offering something we relate to.





LOVE

In my opinion, this is the greatest love song ever written. So simple in its instrumentation — just a piano and an acoustic guitar — along with Lennon's earnest vocals; and everything is so soft, from the playing of the instruments to the tone of his voice, that it really makes you feel like you are being told the truth of love. And the lyrics are perfect. Lennon sings, "Love is real, real is love/Love is feeling, feeling love/Love is wanting to be loved." It's like he's saying everything and nothing at the same time.

He's not telling us anything we don't know; he's just reminding us of the simplicity of love. And then with the lyrics in the middle part of the song, which is the only time the song changes from its repetitive chord progression, Lennon really gets to the heart of the matter: "Love is you/You and me/Love is knowing/We can be." These lyrics are telling. He's saying, whether he meant to or not, that in a relationship, love is not only thinking or believing your relationship can work; it is knowing that it can, and that when you're in love, you don't have to wonder if you're in love; you just know it.

# DAY AFTER DAY

This song kills me every time I hear it. Unlike "Love" by Lennon, the lyrics aren't great as a whole. However, they work well with the music. And particular lyrical phrases, when heard with the music, really stick with you. For instance, the first line, "I remember finding out about you," sung over acoustic guitar after the George Harrison-like slide-guitar intro, really says a lot. It's equal in power and sentiment to Roberta Flack's "The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face" (another song that could've made my list...but the repetition of "your face" at the end of the song always rubs me the wrong way and seems like such a silly way to end the song; plus, TFTEISYF is technically R&B, not Rock).

At the end of each verse Pete Ham sings “I give my love to you,” and right when he sings that, the others join in, in harmony, beautifully emphasizing the point. Another stunning aspect of this song is the dual slide guitar during the instrumental break in the middle of the song. The song was produced by George Harrison; and though not credited on the album, it’s a well known fact that the second slide guitar (there’s only one during the intro) in that middle instrumental segment is George. If the lyrical phrases I mentioned above or the general beauty of the song don’t kill you, the dual slide, especially the oh-so-familiar style and sound of Harrison’s slide guitar, will drive a jagged stake through your heart, twist it around a few times, pull it out, and leave you light-headed as the blood drains from your disheartened chest.





# FOREVER

THE BEACH BOYS, FROM THE ALBUM SUNFLOWER



Sometimes the story around a song is what makes it so beloved — which is kinda the case with the Beach Boys themselves. Yes, the Beach Boys wrote some of the best songs in all of Rock — and maybe some of the cheesiest, you might think. But once you learn the band's story, you realize there are many levels to the boys and their music, just as with the Beatles or the Stones. Not that "Forever" isn't a great love song on its own; it's certainly one of my favorites, and I would have walked down the aisle to this song (just as John Stamos's character on Full House did when he got married — only he walked down the aisle to his own cover of the song) had my wife allowed it (we walked down to "Love" by Lennon instead), but knowing about Dennis Wilson and how this song was received by the Beach Boys family somehow enhances my appreciation of the song. Dennis was sort of the loveable fuckup of the Beach Boys. In the last few years before he died he could be seen around Venice Beach rummaging through trash bins in search of anything of value. He had squandered his savings on friends and good times, and due to legal squabbles and deceitful money managers, Beach Boys royalties were tied up, with the Beach Boys themselves receiving very little of them. And though beloved by his friends and considered by them to be kindhearted and considerate, Dennis was a notorious womanizer whose marriages — including one to his cousin Mike Love's daughter (with whom he started the relationship when she was only 15 years old!) — were disasters, as were other aspects of his social life (he invited the Manson family to live with him in his palatial Beverly Hills mansion for several months in the late '60s). Moreover, Dennis was also a pretty hopeless alcoholic; he ended up dying a totally avoidable and pretty stupid death, drowning after a long day of drinking and diving off a friend's docked boat in Marina del Rey, reportedly searching for items from his own boat which had been docked in the same spot some years previous, before he'd been forced to sell the boat to pay off debts. He was only 39 years old when he died. Nevertheless, he managed in his lifetime to write one of the best rock songs ever recorded — a lush, bittersweet love song that his brother Brian, the band's main songwriter, called "the most harmonically beautiful thing I've ever heard...a rock and roll prayer."

# UNLOVEABLE

THE SMITHS, FROM THE ALBUM LOUDER THAN BOMBS (ORIGINALLY RELEASED AS A B-SIDE ON THE BIG MOUTH STRIKES AGAIN 12")

As a teenager I latched onto this song as though it were written about me, or as though I wished I had written it about myself, because in my own dejected frame of mind at the time — having been dumped by girlfriend after girlfriend — it was, indeed, about me. This song was all about the lyrics for me, since the tune, in my opinion, is pretty average, and it certainly wasn't one of the best Smiths songs or even one of their more interesting ones. However, it does have a catchy, repetitive verse, which is played in a lazy fashion, carried by a groovy bass line. Over this Morrissey sings, "I know I'm unloveable/ You don't have to tell me/I don't have much in my life/But take it — it's yours." Appealing directly to my teenage goth sensibilities of the time, Morrissey continues, "I wear black on the outside, 'cause black is how I feel on the inside," and "if I seem a little strange, well, that's because I am." But despite the dejection and depression, Morrissey suggests that he could, indeed, be loved, singing, "But I know that you would like me if only you could see me, if only you could meet me." And this is the heart of the matter, because ultimately the song is about wanting and needing to be loved. It's like he's saying, "I'm unloveable, yes, but please love me anyway. I know you could if you really tried." It's desperate maybe, and not very becoming, but how can we forget that feeling of being single and alienated yet wanting so badly to be in a relationship, wanting someone to notice us, to reach beneath the antisocial surface and see us as we really are? Because if they could see us they would love us and prove we were indeed loveable.

*You can sympathize with Cubby Creature Brian Weaver at [cubbycreatureb@hotmail.com](mailto:cubbycreatureb@hotmail.com)...and see more Love Music online at [cubby.net/missalette](http://cubby.net/missalette).*



**A Reading from the Cubby Bible:  
The Book of Huck, Chapter 32:  
Teachings of The King of Pain and the Master of Lo Chang**

Hey folks, this is another update. I'm sad to report that I was laid off last week from Carl's Jr. I guess it's no big deal because it wasn't really my life's calling to be hassling teenagers about taking too many ketchups. Also, all those leftover *refritos* (that's *espanol* for refried beans) from that Green Burrito extension were a complete mess by 2am, and I was getting a little bit tired of that too. Anyway, this life change has given me a chance to reflect on a few things, but mainly I've been reflecting on my Lo Chang practice, because as a Lo Chang master, executing The Fist of Fire perfectly is usually on my mind. But then I execute one and I realize it's already pretty much perfect so then I can go on to thinking about other things besides Lo Chang, like maybe finding a job.

The other day after searching on the Web for "Lo Chang instructor" and "positive leader" I wasn't coming up with much. I was getting a bit discouraged, feeling like there was no place in the world for a guy like me and wondering if I should apply at Burger King, even though I don't like their fries. Then right at that moment, I heard the sound of my own mystic kia. Of course it was my cell phone (I got the sample from Episode 3 of Cubbyvision and I made it my ringtone). I was surprised to see it was my ex-wife, Doreen. I hadn't heard from her in a long time.

"Doreen!" I said

"Huck." From the tone of her voice I could tell that something was wrong.

"Doreen, what's the matter?"

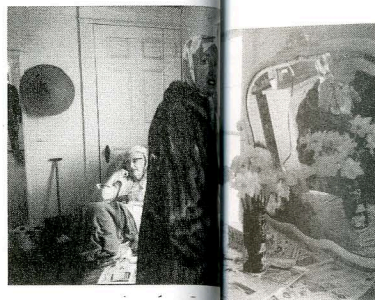
"Oh nothing." She was a little sniffly, so I knew I had to dig a little.

"Doreen - you can't fool me. What's got your goat?"

From the phone came a shrill, forceful sound that sort of reminded me of a group of monkeys I heard in the jungle surrounding the ancient Mayan ruins at Palenque (I'm a bit of a globetrotter). She was beside herself with tears and I knew I had to step in and buck her up.

"Now look here, Doreen, what could be so bad?"

"Oh, it's nothing. Just that Clayton finally left for his mission and I know that it's going to be three months before I see him again." Clayton was her latest significant other, a devout Christian who was committed to working with the indigenous peoples of Bolivia. He had tried to go on his mission last year but it got cut short by some kind of Montezuma's Revenge. I guess since it was in Bolivia it couldn't be Montezuma, but you get the idea.



"Well, little lady, I'd say that's a good time for you to explore your own potential!"

"Yeah, I guess. But it's just so hard not having him around."

"Yes, I'm sure. There are all those things you do together that you can't now. I guess it leaves a big hole in your life."

"Um, yes, that's exactly it, Huck."

"I mean, there are probably all the walks in the park..."

"Not really."

"Or maybe the romantic, multicultural meals you'd make together..."

"Eh, you know I can't cook. We both liked takeout more than anything."

"Or maybe it was the conversation?"

"No, Huck that's not what I'm talking about."

She was right. I knew what she was talking

about.

One of the main things I remember about Doreen when we were together was that she was pretty much insatiable in terms of the sex category. I mean, you guys know me. I like a good romp in the sack just as much as the next guy. In fact, I'd like to think that I always had a few extra things to offer, you know--some tips I picked up during my travels in the Orient. But Doreen, heck, she was a regular hellcat. Maybe even "cat" is too small of an animal for her in this area. She was more of a hell lion!

Anyway, I could barely keep up with her needs, I'll tell you. I'd come home from the dojo more than a little bit tired from a night of disciplined practice with my sensei, Dildeaux, and she'd be waiting there on the couch in a silken robe and those underwear with a string in the back. Sometimes I could barely say hi before she took out the scented oil and was rubbing it all over herself. I guess it was kind of sexy, but I was getting tired of the smell of vanilla after a while. Most of the time I kind of wanted to shower but she would often get up and remove my gi (she was exceptionally good with knots - in both directions if you know what I mean), and I'd be standing there completely nude\* with no excuse not to participate. So there I'd be, tired and nude with Doreen writhing up against me.

Since I've always found Doreen to be an extremely sensuous woman, she was eventually impossible to resist and we'd be sexually grappling there on the (artificial) panda bear rug for the next hour or so. I'll tell you it was pretty amazing while it lasted. But it didn't last. I guess in a way it couldn't because it wasn't just when I came home. It was in the shower afterwards, before dinner, after dinner, dessert, before bed, before breakfast, before work. There were endless variations that she had developed a system of code names for. She'd tell me she felt like doing "Edi Amin's Forklift" or "Gulliver's Green Gauntlet" or, my least favorite (even though it is from Asia), the "Japanese Tourniquet," and I'd have to go into the footlocker and take out whatever ropes, pulleys or appliances the particular activity required. Sometimes set-up took a good hour!

*Let's get  
married...okay?*

\* You see, to execute a perfect Fist of Fire one needs one's loins unrestrained - that's why I haven't bought a pair of boxers in over fifteen years.



Keeping the pace was quite a challenge, and on several occasions I had to tap directly into my Lo Chang energy reserves to get the job done. Before long, I'd show up to train the next day and Dildeaux would stand there stiffly and give me a cold stare, having sensed a disturbance in the cosmic flow of Lo Chang power some time last night or that morning. And worse, it had a terrible effect on my Fist of Fire! It was no use denying it, because even with the deepest concentration and the loudest kia, the thing would come out at significantly less than ninety degrees - usually about seventy-five, on average, which was pretty embarrassing. Needless to say, Dildeaux would not stand for it, and he would put me through the most difficult exercises. All the while he would badger me by saying things like, "Well, well!!! Maybe you need to apply some hair gel to that thing!!! That's as flabby as the chin of a turkey!!! That looks more like the Fist of Farting to me!!!" It all took a great toll on my overall potency, if you get my drift.

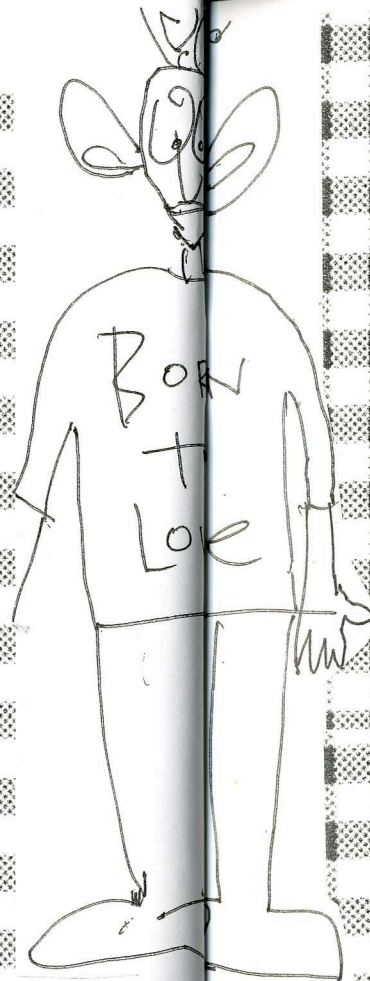
So one night I came home, and Doreen had on some great outfit and some oil. One whiff of the vanilla and I was—well, I'll just say the little Fist of Fire had all the energy of a cold piece of overcooked linguine (I prefer mine al dente, for the record). Nothing that Doreen could cook up in her bubbling sexpot could heat my mojo that night. While she was understanding, I couldn't help feeling that she was unsatisfied in some kind of fundamental way. For the next few days, Doreen would still put on her sultry clothes and try to get me going, but I had reached a real barrier. Even reading the informative brochure "Erectile Dysfunction and You" that she left for me on the coffee table didn't help.

I was in a pretty low state then and I wasn't sure what to do. I felt trapped in a cycle that would constantly drain my energy and never replenish it. So I was surprised one day when I came home and Doreen wasn't there and instead she had made me my favorite meal, chicken teriyaki with gyoza and vegetable tempura on the side. Along with it was a note that said:

You can't control an independent heart,  
can't tear the one you love apart.  
Enjoy a relaxing evening, Huck.  
Love, Doreen

These were, of course, lyrics from one of my favorite songs, "If You Love Somebody Set Them Free" by Sting. I knew everything was going to be all right.

Later she came home and found me curled up on the couch, snoozing peacefully. She quietly sat down next to me and began to stroke my golden locks. I stirred and told her, "That was a really great note, Doreen! You knew just what to say!"



"Oh Huck, I have to admit it wasn't all my doing. I was kind of moping over it all day, but then there was a knock at the door, and it was Dildeaux! He was wearing this weird banjo thing and he didn't say much. He just started singing that amazing Sting song!"

"Wow! That was his shamisen, an Oriental instrument!"

"Whatever. But those lyrics...they really made me think, Huck. I know I'm a woman with sort of extreme needs. And now that you've stepped up the Lo Chang training it must be hard to keep up. So I guess I have to set you free and let you relax a bit when you get home."

"That's great, Doreen!"

"I'm so glad I got that visit from Dildeaux, Huck! And *that* Sting—he is so intelligent; he really knows!"

"Sting and Dildeaux. The King of Pain and the Master of Lo Chang. Doreen, there's just one thing I can say to that!"

"Oh god."

"Haaaaaerrrrraaggghhh!" And with that I let loose the most powerful Fist of Fire that had shot from my tightly toned center in weeks.

"Huck?" It was Doreen on my cell phone.

"Huck, what was that? Did you just do one of your karate chop things?" I had, I guess. While remembering that pivotal time in our history I had become so lost in my memories that I'd unconsciously executed a Fist of Fire just thinking about the Fist of Fire I'd executed that one day long ago.

"Oh, sorry, Doreen. I was just remembering something and, well, I think the lesson I learned is really appropriate to this situation."

"Huck, what are you talking about?"

"Let me put it this way: Free, Free, Set Them Free."

"Oh, Huck! I remember that!"

And in that moment, I knew that the lesson I learned from both Sting and Dildeaux was still very appropriate and that everything would be okay.







Angela Hodgkinson

## In Water

Secrets live  
just under the river stones.  
They hiss and dribble  
about what I have failed to be.  
On dry land  
you tolerate my kiss,  
and reach for me in safe places.  
You are full from loss,  
but desire is not replaced by  
hating to lose.

The river  
sweeps the rocks clean  
of moss and silt.  
I, too, could be cleared away  
in just inches  
of fast flowing water.  
I dare the current.  
Try all your best moves!

In the instant it takes a secret  
to stand and live,  
I fall back into the rocks  
and water quickly moves me  
forward a short way.  
I say: this is not my fault.  
But how can that be so?  
I slow in the shallows,  
I stand  
on tread of ruined shoes,  
clutching the stones, I walk,  
struggle to calmer flows. I stop.  
Secrets are not lies, I know.  
They push back more like truth.  
Not cruel, not blind.  
Is that what I have been?

Safe on the bank,  
but secrets have now  
risen through my feet.

They shape my clothes;  
They speak like I would,  
if I had courage.  
They are more me  
than I could ever be.

I cannot find my way  
to what you want  
from day to day. I cannot tell  
what you believe  
from what you know  
from what you no longer care  
to question.

I can only dodge  
the debris of our flooded home.  
My underwater voice  
gurgles nonsense,  
but I am not your secret.  
We have lived here  
too many years in  
this water.

— Dana Furby  
danafurby@gmail.com

## RIGHT WAY

You might say  
there is a right way,  
and alternatively,  
a backward glance  
leading nowhere.

But what if  
we have been following  
the footprints of ghosts  
on water;

the memory of  
someone else's wake?

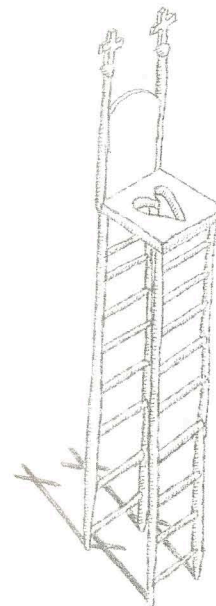
If we were to stop,  
the waves would settle  
and all ways would  
look the same again.

Choose any one.

Or don't.

Or back up a while  
and stay with me  
in the unexamined yesterday.

— Dana Furby  
danafurby@gmail.com

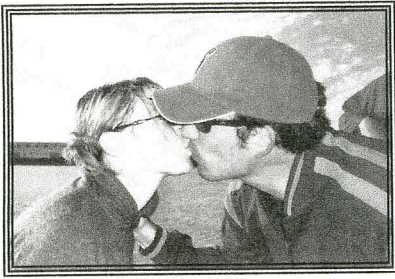


## Kismet



Andrew "The Slow Poisoner" Goldfarb  
andrew@ognerstump.com





## Splendor for Cyrus & Emily

When we were children,  
laying low,  
chin level  
with the blue buffalo grass,  
under the California sun,  
day dreaming  
ourselves into kings and queens  
of the ant world,  
curiously, tenderly  
parting the blades  
to view our insect minions,  
we imagined  
our future heroism, our big,  
unbelievable doings,  
our serious adult adventures.  
Who could have told us then  
that the greatest  
feat of all would be  
to come to this long valley  
with the hand  
of the one you love  
and for once,

not hesitate, but risk the rising  
and the rising  
together into the warm air  
and to know your lungs  
will withstand the altitude  
until you have become  
each other's oxygen,  
a new deeper breath,  
to rise  
into the belly of the cloud  
and learn to navigate  
the white waves of cumulus,  
until at a certain  
height you can even see  
yourselves below, years earlier,  
lovely children, nose down  
in that grass,  
and smile to know  
what you did not know then,  
that you have lived all your life  
for this moment,  
this rising.  
O splendid, O heavy joy.

— Ada Limón (adalimon.com)

*Ada read this poem at the wedding of her brother Cyrus and Cubby Creature Emily in 2005. Ada is the author of two award-winning collections of poetry. Her third book of poems, **Sharks in the Rivers**, will be released in 2010 from Milkweed Editions.*

## This Confession of Love Saved in Secret

This confession of love  
saved in secret  
With clever care  
for later savoring,  
And lust that is "tabled"  
without regret,  
Grows steady in true hearts  
unwavering.  
It's the dark moon  
that laughs its way to full  
As I avert my eyes  
and dream of you,  
And that long night is frazzled  
by the pull  
Of the rising sun  
and the morning due.

Long hellos bring  
their own rewards in time,  
In gentle steps that forge  
a path unbound.  
And eyes open like a sponge  
for sunshine  
With alchemic fibers  
woven and wound.  
Those left for dead  
are newly arisen;  
The head turns,  
the foot taps to the rhythm.

— Antonette Goroch  
antonette@rodentrecords.com

## Journey Was Going to Be Long



Nina Barry

ninabarry.com



## WE ARE BEING STRETCHED

We are being stretched  
thin, soft and unstable,  
but absorbing, too,  
like a full sponge holding on  
to every drop  
for fear of the coming thirst.

When I make no sense,  
when you want  
to shout me into  
something comprehensible,  
wait,  
do not waste water.  
It hurts to speak and know  
that what comes out  
is a noble failure.  
But what is so bad about it?  
We lived through this before.  
A child learns language  
never imagining defeat  
despite  
the constantly unmet need.  
One day sound turns to word,  
and word to idea,  
and idea to expectation.  
It is only then that we turn  
cowardly.  
Deprived.  
Entitled.  
We throw up our hands  
and cry,  
"I never knew you at all!"

But what did we expect?  
Must a sponge be fluent  
in the language of water  
before it gives in,  
lets the flood fill its body,  
learns to trust its role?  
Maybe all your pain  
is really  
all my fault.  
Maybe the shape of my mouth  
will not allow me  
to make those sounds  
you feel you must hear.  
Maybe apart  
we will soon believe  
it is better  
to be understood  
on our own terms;  
believe  
that there are other ways  
to quench thirst.

Or  
we can find  
each other in the lowest  
place, taking more  
time than memory  
will ever give us;  
Soak up and wring out  
a million different ways,  
because that is  
what is done  
between sponges  
and water.

— Dana Furby  
danafurby@gmail.com



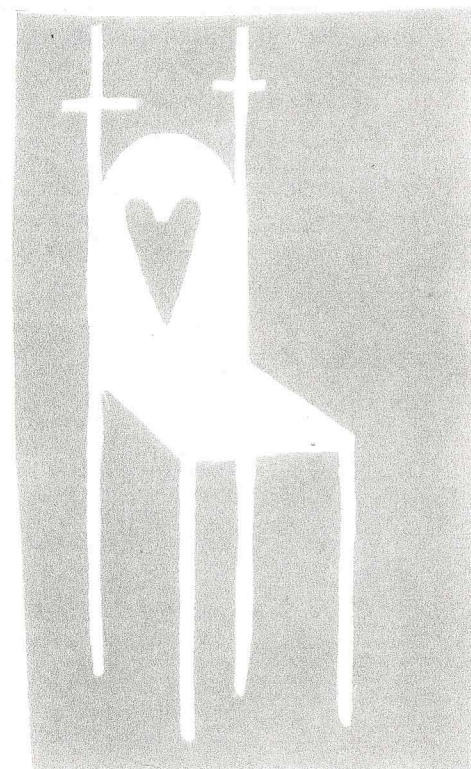
Julianne

a-jsterling@comcast.net

## Odious

Like not letting Jamesetta  
sing "At Last."  
Like not letting Martin Luther  
shout "Free at last!"  
Like not letting  
slave descendants  
sit in that Chair.  
Like not letting my lover  
share my health care.

— jamez l. smith  
jamezsmith@gmail.com





I Love You  
by Jonathan Colburn

You hear it everyday. I heard it today, standing in line  
listening to a stranger mumble it into a cell phone;  
*I Love You*, they said, passing me while closing the phone.  
They didn't say goodbye or I'll see you soon, they just said

### *I Love You*

It came at the end of a conversation that seemed to last  
a lifetime. They had picked up the movies, they said,  
and they were on their way to pick up the Chinese take-out,  
but stopped for a quick coffee because it had been a long day.

And I imagine them at home now, curled up on the sofa  
eating Lo Mein with the blue hue of the screen flickering  
across their tired faces, watching their rented love story  
through eyes growing too heavy to make it to the end.

Somewhere beyond their faces lit up in the static screen,  
I can see my grandmother, well on her way to somewhere else  
as I curled up beside her and rocked her gently in the silence  
of the afternoon, punctuated only by the rattles of her exhale.

And I wonder if she heard me whisper that it had been a long  
day  
and that we just needed to take a little nap, or if she felt my  
arms  
wrapped around her, the way I can still feel her hand  
squeeze mine when I finished by telling her:

### *I Love You*

My final goodbye that fell into silence, punctuated by nothing  
but the gentle squeeze of her hand, just before it loosened  
its grip, just before her heavy eyes closed and she passed me  
in time.

Jonathan Colburn started writing poetry in 2007 in a desperate  
attempt to save his dumb ass after his wife of 10 years grew tired of  
his penchant for madness and sought to find someone "normal" (which  
she did 10 minutes after packing a bag). He has been the recipient of  
several lawsuits, physical beatings, broken teeth, overdoses,  
debilitating chemical withdrawals, outstanding warrants and  
consistently bad news from highly trained medical professionals. He is  
currently a 37-year old freshman at the University of Indiana, where he  
is futilely trying to get back to the start. His greatest unknown  
achievement was his role in summoning "The Cubby" to Florida Street  
in San Francisco in late 1995, early 1996. He invoked (with the help of  
Kenneth Anger) the spirit of Anton LaVey, whom he studied  
passionately during his stay. The highly acclaimed 'Satanic Embryo'  
album was a result of this invocation, from which the Cubby eventually  
rose. He traffics in shameless self-promotion, writing, low-brow  
intellectualism, advice, psychology, philosophy, theology, pornography,  
self-analysis, pop culture, sociology, medication, sex, cartoon logic,  
every flavor of abuse, and general bad craziness. He lives in Bedford,  
Indiana with his girlfriend and her 4-year-old son and 5-year-old  
daughter. You can contact him via email at  
[junkopardner@comcast.net](mailto:junkopardner@comcast.net)



MBINA



### Pompeii

Some loves walk in a door,  
others stand in line.  
Ours was hidden beneath rock and sand,  
a world unseen.  
The lurch of tectonic plates  
and then,  
a harmonic tremor  
releasing an ecstasy of sparks.  
We were fugitives together,  
wrapped in that Fahrenheit cloud.

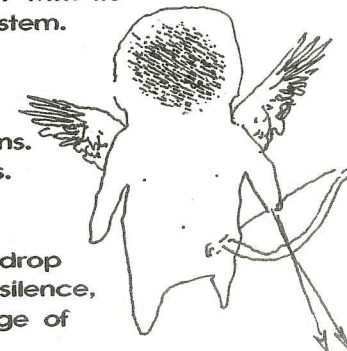
Until, of course, the unending night  
when we choked on dust  
and hugged the ground,  
astonished to be  
flayed by boiling rocks.  
The sun cowering,  
the spew hurling missiles,  
slitting open a new earth.  
The land once known, now  
rufted, smoking.  
Sherman would be proud.

Angels we have heard on high  
Sweetly singing o'er  
the ash.

We couldn't outrun them.  
They were in that park, I think.  
They were in that hotel room.  
They are in that little box where I keep  
the glass fragment with its  
slightly scorched stem.

I trip sometimes  
over what remains.  
The stone carcass.  
Entwined.  
Petrified.  
Inside, a tiny raindrop  
entombed in the silence,  
resting on the edge of  
an eyelash.  
A majesty both ancient  
and alive.

--April Valentine





## I'VE GOT A FEELING

I've got a feeling.  
yes, something like an inkling,  
though more like a haircut,  
and it grows inward  
and scratches my brain.  
Nothing so irritating  
that I can't focus  
on the common sensations  
of just "b"eing,  
but ticklish enough  
to arouse a sense  
of social nonconformity,  
of giggly acceptitude  
of exceptional relevance  
to a universe unfolding itself  
in every cross and stitch  
of such an extravagant quilt...  
which seems to be unraveling  
in war.  
But no, it's not coming to pieces  
as some would preach.  
There's not even a glitch  
in the pattern.  
Every instance  
is performing itself  
exactly as it should,  
and so is each character  
in the play.  
and somebody like Jello  
is important to everybody  
simply because he can  
but won't take you away  
from your ego,  
but he will offer  
alternate methods

of dancing your own reality  
using words, ideas, and actions  
which were never so obvious  
as now.

What's he trying to do, you ask?

Well, what the shit  
am I trying to do?  
And what are you doing,  
talking to strangers?

Don't you know  
that we're estranged?  
Delve into my abstractions,  
that's just how I tap dance  
and mesmerize friends

I never knew.  
Actually, all of this makes sense  
to a cat,

who would never memorize  
the names of constellations  
or street signs so that he might  
find his way home  
after an evening  
of erotic exploration.

Be an astronaut.  
Put on your space suit  
and lose the confines of a  
mother ship's robot arm.  
I'll spin you around so that you  
can see the underbelly  
of the beast  
and the grand design  
in each of her scales  
which seems to hold us  
each in place.

— Tim Bates  
timbates123@hotmail.com

## blue song

if i had one green dollar for each tear that i have cried  
or every "i love you" where it turned out that they had lied;  
if i could get some credit for the many years i've lost  
in paying off love's interest while incurring some new cost;  
if I got my comeuppance for the hours and hours i've spent  
in longing for forever with some mister came-and-went;  
if i got compensation for the fun that we have missed  
I'd have the funds to marry you, and baby, I'd insist.

--Jol (endofreligion@gmail.com)





# P.S. I love Sting!

By Becky Haycox

One thousand, one hundred and seventy-nine days. That's how long I was in love with a boy named Dane DeMarco. To follow are some excerpts of my actual teenaged diaries, in which I wrote daily, from age 12 to 18.

## The Obsession Starts

Age 15, 9th Grade

May 30

I REALLY like Dane DeMarco. I have no idea why. He is obnoxious, sarcastic — but there's something SO affecting.

Maybe I see a glimmer of niceness once in a while. I dunno. All I'm sure about is that I am near to head-over-heels FLIPPED over him!

June 1

At the theatre tonight, Ronnie and Andy began REALLY pulling my hair.

The joke was definitely over when it was killing me and they weren't laughing. I screamed at Dane to help me and he did!

June 6

Oh Dane, Dane... I haven't seen you since Sunday. Sigh.

June 11

Dane didn't talk to me tonight, but I, well, I love him.

June 17

Dane DeMarco + me.

June 25

I went by the theatre to say goodbye for the summer. Everyone was there except Dane, who counted most.

July 29

I miss New York. I hate Oxnard. The Cars sing "She's my one desire." I wouldn't mind being somebody's one desire. Yeah!

August 21

Mom took me school shopping and for a makeover today! I got a pair of — tada — Sassoon jeans! I never thought I'd see the day when I could fit into a pair. However, the Oasis Sands lip gloss gets on my teeth, and I ruled out mascara because it is slut-some. I also got my hair cut. It looks great! It looks a lot like Mindy from the television show "Mork and Mindy."

September 7

Age 15, 10th Grade

Oh, Dane Dane Dane. I saw him today. I was thinking about him, and THERE HE WAS.

Oh, wow, he was SO nice to me, too! THERE'S HOPE!!!! I LOVEHIMILO-VEHIMILOVEHIMILOVEHIM!!!!

September 10

Dane, Dane, Dane. He came to the theatre this afternoon, but he did not come to acting class later. Sigh. Well, so long.. gonna wear my SASSOONS tomorrow!

September 16

Dane called me "pygmy toes". God-damit.

September 17

Dane came to the theatre tonight. We were obnoxious to each other. I didn't feel like making him like me right now. But he DID pay me some attention. I'd like to talk about him more. He's a nice guy, I mean, overlooking all the sarcasm and everything, he's pretty responsive and interested in the neat things I say, and likes insane ideas.

And he likes a person who isn't dumb at knowing their music. Hey, that's ME!

September 18

I want to talk more about Dane. Sigh. Didn't see him today, so there's nothing new to report, except that the more I think of him, the more I love him. He hasn't gotten much nicer since Saturday, but I have a feeling he likes me. Maybe because I hope so much it just appears that way. But I HOPE NOT! He gets so much handsomer, smarter nicer. This is an OUT AND OUT, NO-NONSENSE, FULL FLEDGED, ADULT SIZED, NO-DEPOSIT, BIG CRUSH!!!!!!

September 21

Sandra and I asked Dane for a ride. We all sat in the car waiting for the windows to defrost and picking out tapes.

Dane asked HALF-jokingly, if we wanted to go smoke a bowl with them, intending to freak us "goody two shoes" out. We just said "no thanks." I would have accepted, if I hadn't been with Sandra, who is so UNDARING.

September 22

Sandra and I went to Ticketron and bought 3 tickets to the Joe Jackson concert on the 30th, then fought and chewed over who else we would bring. We had to find somebody who would, in a sense, be our bodyguard — the Joe Jackson crowd is a little weird.

And so when we got to my house, I gathered my courage, and called THE Mr. Dane DeMarco. He said, "Sure. I'll go." And that...was that! He's going!!

HE'S GOING WITH US!!!

DANENNNNNNNNNNNnnnnn. Oh wow. Incredible. Too much. Oh, no! I can't believe it! DANEDANEDANE-DANEDANE. P.S: Dane.

September 25

I am not REALLY sure, but, well, I think Dane DeMarco really does like me! The concert is in 5 days, do you hear me??



## September 30

Joe Jackson was the best! Dane was nice, Sandra wasn't. She sat BETWEEN Dane and me! It's 1:45am, I have two tests tomorrow I didn't study for, I love Dane, I love Joe Jackson and The End!

## September 31

That was a Great Concert. I'm totally in love with Joe Jackson! Also, the niceness of Dane was incredible. He was REALLY nice. It leads me to believe that he perhaps might like (as in LIKE) me. Yahoo...

## October 5

Dane (sigh) was at the theatre. He didn't acknowledge my existence, except to try to push me out the window. Oh well. I love Dane DeMarco! Bye!

## October 12

It's 3:30am. I lied to Dad and told him I was staying at Sandra's. Instead, we hounded Dane until he invited us to his house. We talked, then we got the munchies and bought donuts, we came back to his house and talked talked talked. I SHOULD be elated. But one thing I have to say about this is that SANDRA is beginning to like Dane. I can't believe it, but she insisted on sitting in the front passenger seat with him TWICE, monopolized the donut conversation with him, and talked about such subjects as school (which I can't talk about with them because they're both older than me.) And THEN when we got home, she told me she could see why I like him. And remember, she sat BETWEEN Dane and me at the concert?

Fuck her. I'm glad she's moving away. From now on, I will only refer to her as sandra.

## October 13

Well. I got in a huge load of shit -- I got caught lying to dad. Dad confronted me and made me feel bad, but he forgave me, and allowed me to go see "Rocky Horror Picture Show" with everybody including Dane, and sandra. I sat next to Dane but he didn't say anything. Oh, shit. What a real DRAG. I'm so upset.

## October 14

Seeing Dane this weekend was not worth it for the shit I got. It would've been GREAT if Dane had been nice to me. He wasn't -- he was cold, in fact.

I don't know why! I knew he liked me more than sandra before, but now? What did I do? I haven't been extremely obnoxious, or, in fact, different in anyway.

Does he like sandra now? I don't know.

Goodbye, perhaps forever.

## October 27

The Great Thing that happened at the Halloween party: Willy was being stupid and started kissing my gloved hand passionately, since I was dressed as a princess. Dane walked up, grabbed my other hand, and said "She's MINE!" and held it for such a long while that I asked him to stop.

Now, I KNEW he meant it to make fun of me, but I don't care. Then, later, when I was talking to sandra he came up to me and made a Kiss Kiss noise and wiggled his eyebrows. THAT was his usual self. But it was nice anyway.



## November 9

I'm failing Geometry and Biology but WHO CARES!!!! Right now, I'm just very involved with this Blondie song on the radio, thinking about Dane saying hi to me today, and sex. But I'm ALWAYS thinking about sex. Along with about 90% of the world of adolescents.

## December 14

Dane is being an asshole to me again. Is it because he has to act "cool" in front of his friends?

## December 17

Dane likes me. Uh, I think. He put his arm around me and made a crack about my conditioner. I love him. And I do believe it's gonna work. Damn, he better keep liking me! Lord knows how hard I tried!

## January 5

I saw Dane today. First after school, in which he was completely UNSATISFACTORY, in relation to ME, and called my clothes preppie.

I would've been completely depressed and would've thought well, it's over, all my months of trying, shot to shit, IF (I said IF) it wasn't for after the play. I was shaking hands goodbye with everyone as a joke. Dane gave me a "brother" handshake then gave me a "dirty" handshake\*, and kind of came close and seemed somewhat nice. So, all is NOT lost!

\* "dirty" handshake: you have your victim in a regular handshake, you stroke their palm with your middle finger whilst giving a dirty stare!

## January 12

Omigod. I must get into the telling of the cast party. I did my damndest not to follow Dane around, okay, so then, after some weird experiences (including Dane finally declaring that I did know my music and saying that I was nice), I begged him to give me a ride home. So he did, joking to me and everyone that he wouldn't get me home till we did "strange things", his words.

The Climax. In front of my house, just before I got out, he leaned his cheek very close to mine and I kissed it (going to heaven and back), and just before closing the door, I sat back down and leaned my cheek towards him, which he KISSED! FINALLY!!!

## January 13

He kissed me. Actually. DANE DEMARCO KISSED ME. (on the cheek -- but it's a START!!) Okay, to Dane, it probably wasn't an earth-moving experience -- he might not even remember, he was so wasted. Anyway, it wasn't much, especially to HIM, but it certainly was something. And it just might be a sign of my EFFORT paying off slowly, but SURELY! OH, DANEDANEDANEDANEDANE.

## January 14

I am head over heels in love. But now it's a sort of calm realization that I am in love with a man who is not with me, but does like me. I have come to terms with myself -- I am so involved with him (admittedly one sidedly) that I couldn't stand it without him. But I'm not a complete, mature, young woman now. QUITE THE CONTRARY! I'm STILL A FUCKING CRAZY KID!



## January 15

I have Dane on the brain. My school-work is suffering badly. I am going too far – Dad's trying to mentally probe me now. I am constantly writing about Dane because nothing else occupies my mind.

## February 6

Oh, Dane. To put myself through this much I must love you. It's either because I don't wanna give up and not get anything from the other end after almost a year of trying (GREED), or simply because I CAN'T let you go (LOVE). Must be the latter. Goodbye, perhaps forever.

## February 16

Tonight was the Best Night. I got to go to Andrea's party, and what a party. I drank quite a bit, and Dane was there. He was shunning me, kind of, but then, as the evening wore on, he put his feet (OOMPH) in my lap and slept for a while. Then, (this is it, guys).. I was about to leave when he called me over, still laying down, pulled me to him, and kissed me, on the lips. Then I kissed him, and left. Stay tuned!

## February 17

Oh, boy, last night was WICKED! Dane finally gave me a decent kiss. Whenever I think about it, my little heart is set aflutter. I figure that we will go a little further, shall we say, every 1 month or so. Until we're married and have 8 kids. But seriously that was wonderful. I'm so happy. I love Dane so much.

P.S. "Punk Polka" is a hilarious song! I heard it on Dr. Demento!

Dane, oh Dane, thank you so much!

## February 18

Oh, Dane. Dammit. I wish there were another party so I could see him again. I only want Dane. And by god why should I wait till another party? Because I'm chicken.

He'd probably think I was bats or an ASS-HOLE if I called him up just to talk. Shit! All I can do is climb the walls and just HOPE that he will call me one of these days. Shit, Dane. Call me. CALL ME! On the line! You can call me, any, any time!

## February 19

I love Dane so much that I can't even say. Serious. Anyway, I'm so glad he kissed me, so I know he likes me and a kiss is better than him just telling me (because kissing is FUN to boot!)

And, dammit, although I don't have much experiences under my belt, I KNOW how to kiss. For a fact. I wish Dane would realize there's something going on under this lost exterior. Dammit. I'm yours for the asking, honey.

Dane kissed me. Yay!! Dane, DANE, kissed me! He kissed me! So, all he needs is a party to kiss me. Well, booze, he has to be wasted to do it.

He probably won't even remember doing it. Oh, well, I DOUBT, unless he was completely, on-the-floor wasted, he wouldn't do that to just anyone. I really do doubt it. I'm special!

P.S. I love Sting!

## March 2

Dane was just plain blah to me today.

## March 22

I have to write way quickly, because I'm due at the play (which sucks to the max, by the way) and directly after I'm going to the cast party, where I'm spending the night. I'm dressed in slinky attire. Like, I am a VIXEN! Dane will be there.

I had the dirtiest dream last night – about giving a BJ to an English transvestite. Jesus Christ. What can I say.

## March 23

Saw Dane last night. Nothing. No trumpets nor fireworks in HIS eyes.

## Age 16

## May 17

Dane called me "Drecky" today and made fun of the way I say "like".

Goddamit. I'm back to where I started.

Goodbye, perhaps forever.

Becky is a writer, crafter, monologist, techie, gadfly and dabbler. She read some of her diary excerpts at the *Ponyshow* in LA last year. She regularly performs and teaches improv in her small Southern California town. You can read her blog by visiting [www.beckyhaycox.com/hamblog](http://www.beckyhaycox.com/hamblog). She happens to know that Dane (not his real name) is on Facebook but has no intentions of friending him.

