



FALL 2009

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Hello Public!

Happy days – the first Public Journal is here. It's been a long time coming, but like a caterpillar morphing into a butterfly (or some kind of pithy simile), your thoughts, desires, stories and secrets have become public, and they're beautiful.

Everything you see here is written by a Princeton student, by one of us. Heck, I even wrote something, and you know what, it felt fantastic. These tasty morsels are your submissions. Honest or not, doesn't the old maxim still go "there's many a truth in jest?"

It's been a true pleasure bringing this all together. Thanks for being you.

– Will.

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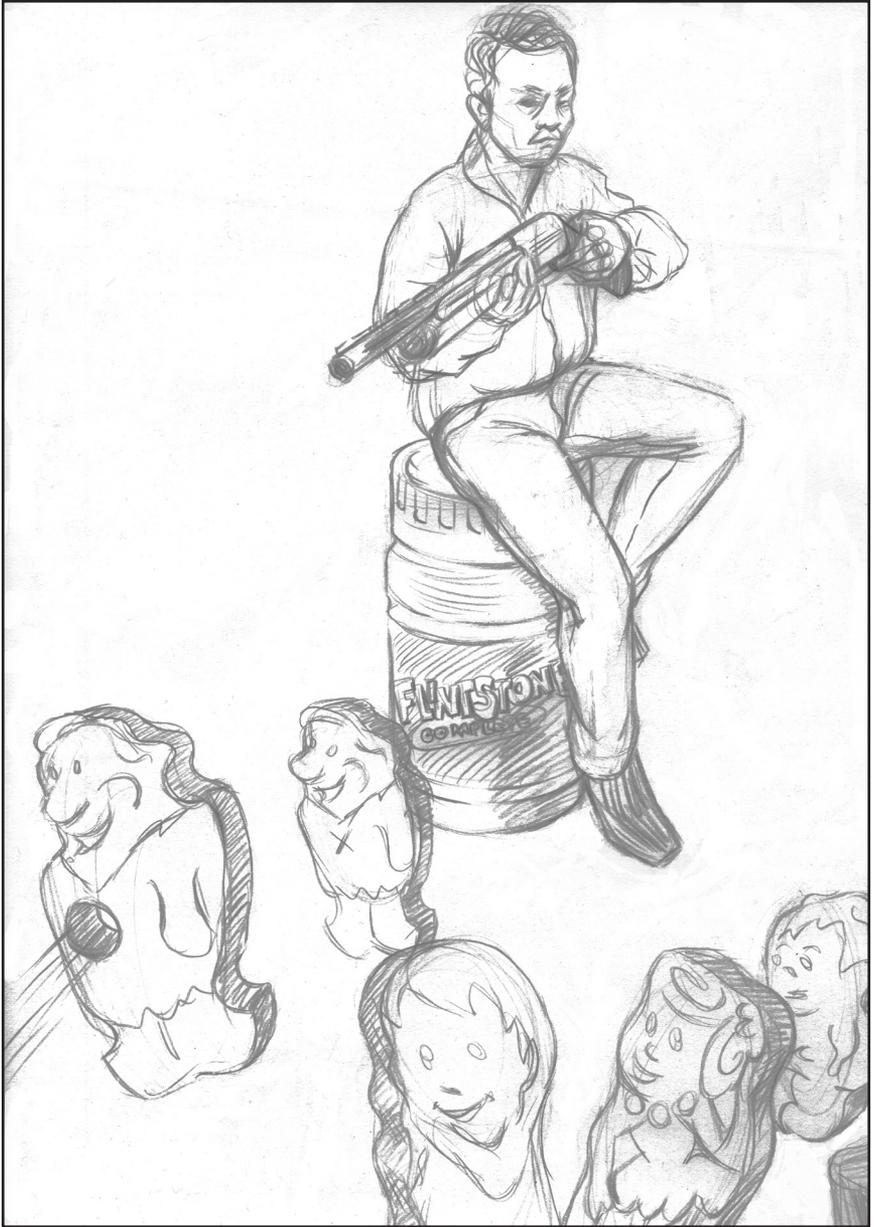
EMAILS TO MYSELF ABOUT MYSELF

Occasionally I am alarmed by the fact that I am twenty and have not come close to being in love. My friends tell me I'm still young, my time will come, that love is something you can't rush. It sounds like what my friends used to tell me when I was alarmed that I was thirteen and had not come close to my first kiss. At the time they were right, and in the end it turned out not to matter. I have kissed so many boys since then that I couldn't even name them all much less remember what it was like to kiss them. I see the analogy, that first kisses are the thirteen-year-old version of first love, but I think this is different. I used to worry that I was ugly. Now I think there's something wrong with me inside.

I make a lot of lists. I used to make lists of characteristics I thought made up the perfect man. At the time it was something funny to post on my online journal, to have people comment with their commiseration or disapproval, but after a while it became an obsession that occupied afternoons when I should have been doing calculus homework. I itemized the qualities of the perfect man to a near 200 items, and that was just 2006. Then there were the 2007 and 2008 lists. "Doesn't gel his hair" was one trivial one. "Isn't a pussy" was more heavily weighted.

What's worse than being in a foreign country with few friends all alone in a house that's too dark at night is being in a dorm room at a small private university surrounded by friends and feeling the crushing weight of loneliness. The hours between dinner and bedtime are oppressive.

The melodrama is abundant.



Are You Sleeping?

Fuck you.

Because we are about to hit it.

Shots. Shots. Shots. Shots.

Shotties.

We're doing some fucking shots. We have just completed Night Part 1, and are gearing the fuck up for Night Part 2: Redux, Son of Night Part 1.

R: "I'm getting some more drank."

We just had breakfast at the Wa and we're ready to go out. We've got a handle of 151, four red bulls, and a fucking plan: shots, Terrace, shots, party until brunch, shotsy brunch, maybe more shots. Hope to see you all there.

R: "I'm getting fucked up right now."

And we're doing it again in twelve hours.

T: "I'm going to be so fucking ill in three hours. No fear, no weakness. Shots."

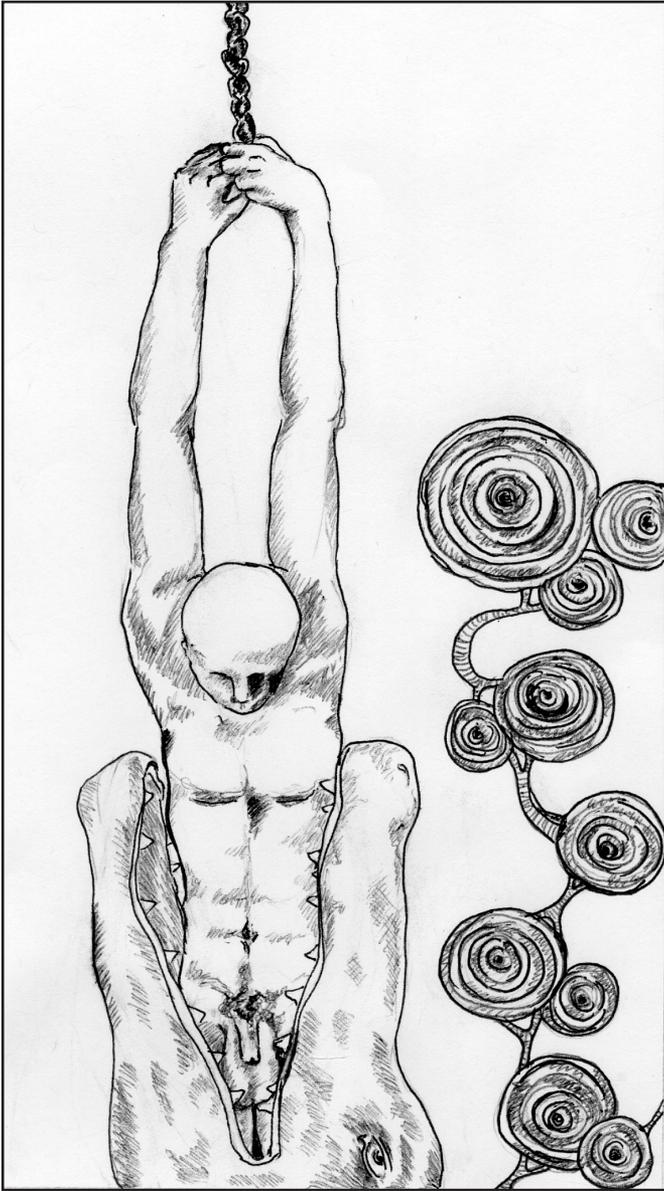
Get fucking ready. It may feel like you need some sleepies, but pop that Flintstones Vitamin, throw back a Bull, and get your game on.

CONFESSIONS 1 BY VARIOUS AUTHORS

- ✌ Worst way to break off a hook up: “Do you wanna do foreplay?”
- ✌ I think facebook knows when pictures are scandalous because whenever future-politician eating club members get naked, it always shows up at the top of my news feed. They might as well be captioned, “Download for future blackmail potential.”
- ✌ I have 0 pride in my work. All I care about is if the number that gets spit out gets me a job and makes me look smart. It’s pathetic.
- ✌ I’m the one that ended it...and yet why do I still feel like shit?
- ✌ The reason I get drunk all the time isn’t because I’m a lush. It’s because I love hooking up with you, but I’m always scared that I’m going to do something wrong. I don’t take criticism well but I want to be good at sex. Being drunk is an excuse for all my mistakes.
- ✌ Family vacations just aren’t what they used to be.
- ✌ I’m not even done with my first semester here, and I’m already getting tired of college.
- ✌ If I feel destined to be with my boyfriend, why am I so obsessed with you?



I fantasize about my girlfriend tying me up and spanking me, but I'm too embarrassed to tell her.





A LESSON ON GRAMMAR

How to use “lol” (“laugh out loud”) in online conversations or maybe facebook wall posts:

- » When you want to be sarcastic, and implicitly unenthusiastic, use “lol” – all lower-case letters, no punctuation afterward.
- » N.B. Occasionally you can use this construction post-ironically, indicating that you genuinely think something is funny but know that “lol” is a dated construction that is most often used ironically.

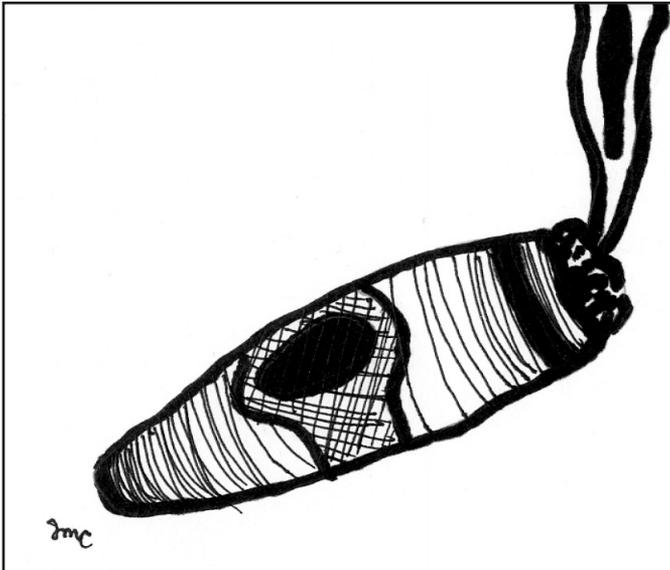
- » “lol” may be accompanied by another phrase, however, like “lol, that’s funny.” In these cases, “lol” can be followed by a comma, but not by any other kind of punctuation.
- » To make that clear, how stupid does “lol!” look?
- » If you absolutely have to use an exclamation point after “lol”, use many of them (“lol!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!11!!!!”). Note the use of “1”s – obviously calculated, never accidental, funny.
- » If something is not funny at all, except with an ironic remove (when it can become VERY FUNNY), then you should use all caps, as in “LOL”. Note: this still should not be followed by any punctuation (that’s why I placed the period outside of the quotes, to make that clear).
- » Sometimes I use extensions of “lol” like “lolol” or “LOLOL”. These phrases soften the irony of the phrase a tad, implying that you genuinely think something is funny, but still want to use the “lol” construction to convey your amusement. Note: these forms are not post-ironic.
- » If you think something is actually funny and you don’t want to be ironic at all, don’t use “lol” or, for that matter, any chat acronym. Use “haha,” or even better, “hahaha” (“hahaha” is the best option usually for these situations).
- » Important: all of these rules can be broken, as long as you do it consciously and assume that the reader will be aware of your rule-breaking as well. Irony: pile that shit on!
- » A final point: facebook wall posts are generally more thought-out and well constructed than online conversations. Therefore, heed these rules more carefully in the former case. You never know who might be reading!

THE NEW PORNOGRAPHER

There are a half-dozen married men on the Internet who pay to see my body. The only sexual pleasure I get from the arrangement is when I masturbate to the naked photographs of their wives I force them to send me. I tell them it is because I am jealous. I am a straight man, and I am a gay whore.

I have had several dreams in which I see their wives in the supermarket. I only take customers who live in the same city as myself, with the always-withheld promise of a physical encounter to drive the price up.

When one of them lost his job this year, I refused his request to skip a month's payment. He paid anyway. I played a song that includes his name in the next video I made, as a tribute to his faithfulness. He asked me later if this meant I loved him. It would have been bad business to say anything but Yes.



THINGS I'VE STUCK UP MY MALE ASS

Pens, sharpies and highlighters

Travel-size deodorant

And shampoo bottles

Bananas and cucumbers

Candles

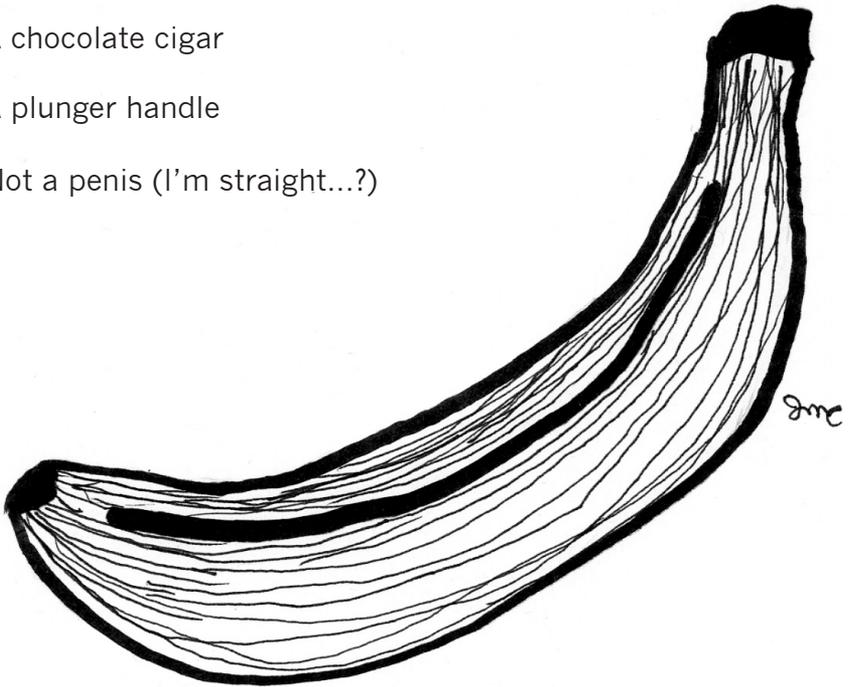
Vibrators

My ten fingers

A chocolate cigar

A plunger handle

Not a penis (I'm straight...?)



Trapped in a net of intertwining vines, we resolved to forge ahead a few feet but had failed for an indefinite hour. No one really cared about time except the guide, and the sun was still up so we stayed, sequestered in a small brambly patch. It was mid-winter and we'd made up our minds months ago to explore this unmarked expanse. Now we took it all in.

The ground was gorgeously littered with leaves. The sun was smooth and lit up the clouds just above the horizon, forming a flat rainbow of color that dissipated up into the prevailing blue. It was way too much to take in and tears started to trickle down my friend's cheeks as he hugged a tree. We stood there unable to move, unconcerned about anything but appreciating everything in our view. Talking amongst ourselves we spoke in trailing fragments, but our uncontrollable joy confessed a mutual understanding.

On our way down from where we came I suddenly realized the weight of a long held inhibition, and there surged an impulse to change that forever. I was teething with excitement and delight. My toes bounced and my hands jittered, and I had to tell them what was on my mind. I believed this was it, when I would finally reveal myself to them, like a relenting magician. They had become my good friends so fast, and I had been an unwilling actor far before my freshman year. I needed to finally break free from these self-imposed bonds of secrecy, but the usual fear won out and those pressing words never left my head. When I think back, it was probably a good thing I kept quiet. None of us was ready.

I was left half caged in my doubts but at least poking my head out of the bars. On a different level, though, I had grasped the importance of our experience, and in that way I had felt freedom. We had recognized the folds of our memories, our identities, our existences. It was profound and mind-blowing, but whimsical. I wonder often if I'm still trapped in that net.

PRACTICE MOMENTS

You know how you do those things with your friends, and you think nothing of it, like I don't need to remember this because so many other things will happen with these friends that I don't need to store any of this up? But then not that many other things happen because it's college and I'm easily stressed and prone to doing my schoolwork instead of living? And then those haphazard moments that you labeled "practice moments," or not so important moments become your best memories in the months ahead?

I'm pretty nostalgic for freshman year. If I had just lived, if I had just hung out more with the awesome guys on my hall. Thank god its not the end yet, and that is the first time I have ever thought that.



CONFESSIONS 2 BY VARIOUS AUTHORS

- ☺ There's nothing quite like a hot cup of coffee and a blowjob in the morning (—my roommate).
- ☺ Once last year to win an argument I told my sister she was overweight.
- ☺ I have wet dreams about my roommate.
- ☺ My boyfriend has never made me come. I wonder if he notices?
- ☺ My biggest procrastination is pressing Home on my Facebook multiple times a minute, to see if there's something new.
- ☺ I lost my virginity to a nun in a Colombian monastery on a charity project.
- ☺ I'm glad no one at Princeton knew me in high school because I'm much more popular here than I ever was at home.
- ☺ There has to be more to life than hook-ups and alcohol.
- ☺ I value humor over almost everything, and to be funnier, I would give almost anything.
- ☺ Hippos are cool!
- ☺ This hot blonde is on her way over right now, but honestly, I'd rather eat some bologna and fall asleep.
- ☺ I always need to go to the bathroom when I'm in an elevator or when I enter a mall.

From:
Subject: SPRING BREEEEAAAKKKK!!!!!!! YEAH! UGH!
Date: March 21, 2008 6:05:48 PM EDT
To:

My Most Dearestest Everyones,

Because I am so excited, I will, as I write this e-mail, be channeling my most ruthlessly frat-tastic inner bro:

UGH!

Tentative party has just experienced a rush of hormones and has blossomed from an adolescent flower into a testosterone (and estrogen!) fueled NIGHTMARE WITH BICEPS THE SIZE OF GERMAN SHEPHERDS!!!

Instead of regular wine, we'll be drinking MAGNUM WINE!!!!

Instead of regular shots, we'll be drinking SHOTS THAT ARE ON FIRE WITH DOUBLE THE ALCOHOL CONTENT!!!!

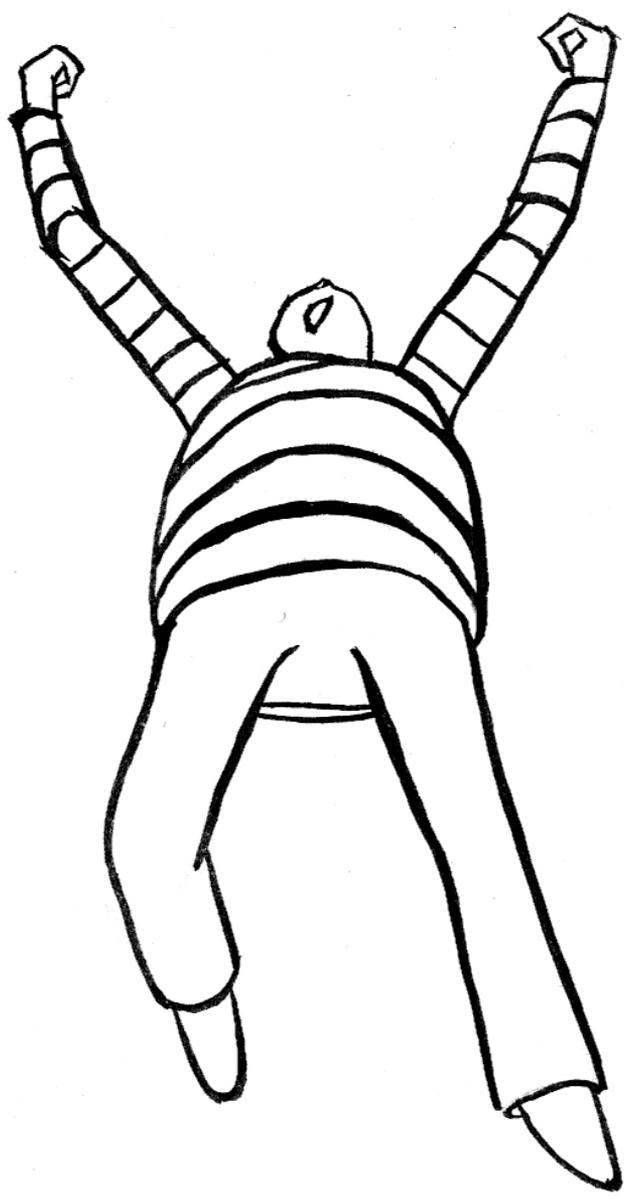
I am about to take a poetry exam, but afterwards, I will be TOTALLY READY TO GO REALLY HARD!!!!!!

B just needs to shower, then moisturize, but then he will be GETTING RIDICULOUSLY PLASTERED!!!!!!!

But you know, realistically, we'll probably just be chilling out and stuff.

If you're still on campus, it is absolutely mandatory that you come by and at least say hi/bye (tear!)

Wuv,



ONE OF TWO

Growing up, everyone told my brother and me that we look extremely alike. So when I began hooking up with his best friend and things didn't work out, I secretly wondered if it was because he felt like kissing me was like kissing my brother.



THE CUSP

I don't want to be a stereotype – I don't want to turn into a cliché. Back to the myth, I suppose, of being special. Are we all clichés? Yes. I don't know. I just hate this insecurity. Why do I give a shit what people think? But everyone is insecure like this – look around – all the people who do it are insecure. Are they? Well, not all, but a lot are. Some people really just do like the atmosphere of it better than other places. For me, it's about ascendancy; ascendancy prompted by the internalized feeling of not belonging that came from the first years of school. I remember I was always too scared to see the shrink. I wrote a letter asking for an appointment that I never delivered.

Was I depressed then? I think so. I don't know. I am needy, craving affirmation and acceptance. I want people to love me – well, I think everyone wants that. But why do I want people to love me? I don't know. I think that this would be a good thing to talk about in my next therapy session. I really miss therapy, but I don't want to become addicted to it. I am so introspective as it is. Who knows.

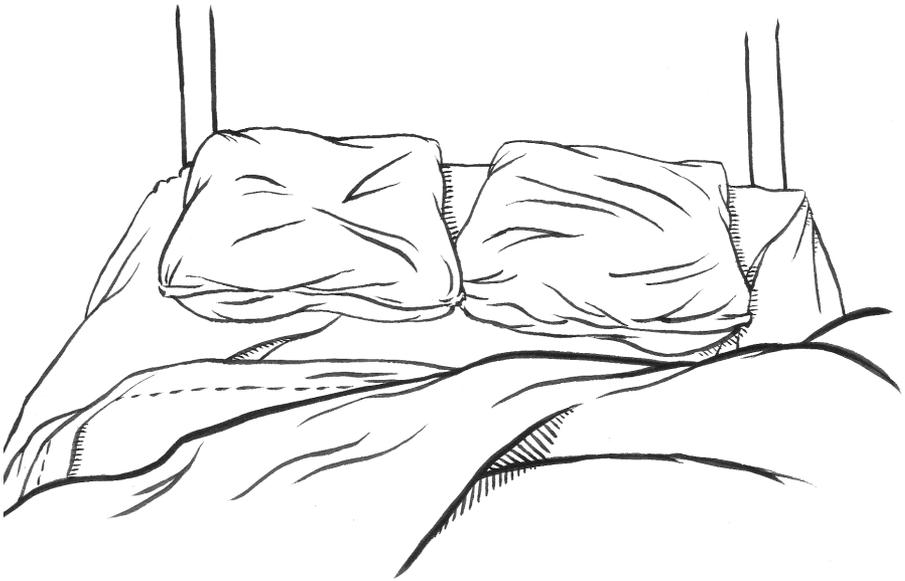
By the way, do I crave physical intimacy as an indicator of success rather than for pleasure? I think so – I don't need to have sex, but when I don't I feel like a failure and unwanted. I'm not though – but why is it that anyone who doesn't like me I like, and then if they like me I don't like them? Who knows.

Also, why do I have such high standards? It's because I don't want to "compromise" myself – but is that fair? I am scared I think, and that is why I don't want to destroy my protected position of false superiority. I am not secure enough to be equal, so I need to feel special before I can have sex with someone? Who knows. It's all about what people think, or what I think people would think. I don't

tell people everything, but I will tell a few, I suppose. And no matter how few/many I tell, they are the ones I crave acceptance from.

Anyway. Bed. These are good things to think about later because I feel that there is room for a lot of progress, but it's not going to happen yet.

Am I on the cusp? I don't know.

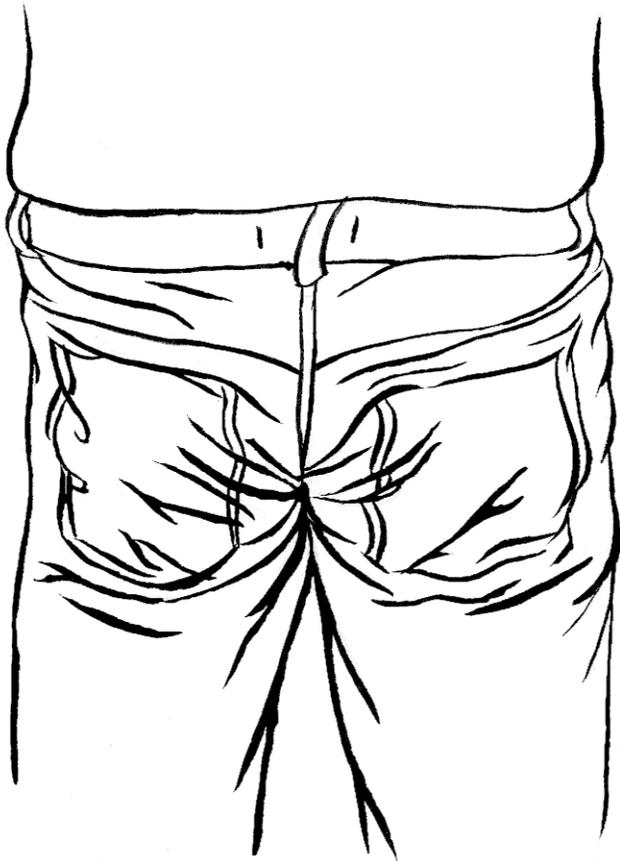


I WANT MORE THAN ANYTHING RIGHT NOW

- ✓ It to be 4 ½ hours ago.
- ✓ A blowjob and chocolate chip pancakes.
- ✓ Make that chocolate chip banana pancakes/bj simultaneously...it's been that kind of day.
- ✓ A cold beer and a good fuck...Damn that sounds cliché.
- ✓ Veggie udon in a park.
- ✓ To not have to see my grandmother, to marry my boyfriend, to know everything that happened in the 20th century, for so many reasons.
- ✓ A sweet job offer in Manhattan and a crappy apartment in Queens with my best friend.
- ✓ The ability to simultaneously sleep in one parallel universe, write a paper in another parallel universe and have sex in yet a third.
- ✓ A good night's sleep and to find out about my summer internship!
- ✓ A fat blunt.
- ✓ A cup of ice cold apple cider. Laced with adderall.
- ✓ A really, really good, hard fuck.
- ✓ I want this idiot to finish his thesis so we can spend April making out like we were in high school again.
- ✓ A massage, a nap in the sun and a completed JP – on a silver platter, please.
- ✓ My snuggie.

ALL MINE

I'm a very skinny guy. And whenever I feel like I have to take a shit, I clench my cheeks real hard and think: "No, goddammit. Keep it."



**THE PUBLIC
JOURNAL.**

Who We Are

Princeton's Public Journal is not the place for fiction, sparkling wit, or poetry; it is a whimsical megaphone for the secrets, desires, reflections and obsessions that we all repress and hide. A vehicle of intimacies, the PJ frees the writer and touches the reader. In an audacious and tender gesture, it invites the reassuring realization that we are not alone. The Public Journal's editors do not edit or in any way alter the anonymous submissions from students. Everything you read is real material from real students. So bring it on! Free yourself! Tell us all of those thoughts left unsaid, all of those wonderful, tragic and anxious moments of your lives so far.

How We Work

We don't kiss and tell. Only the Editor-in-Chief will ever know who's contributed, and that's a secret that never gets told. Each edition, we list our cherished and talented contributors at the front of the book, but if you don't want to be listed, you can easily let us know.

And What About You?

We are looking for talented, creative, engaged people (just like yourself) to write, draw and edit for the Public Journal. We encourage anyone and everyone to get in touch. Plus, we're always looking for new friends....

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