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Your Past
Your Future
Your Dream Last Night
You
&
Me

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Hello curious one,

Congratulations! You're one step closer into getting into the mind of other Princeton students. What you will find in the next pages is a hodgepodge of information about the lives, fears, and desires of Princetonians, as told by the students themselves. No editing has been done at all; so much for "editor"-in-chief. The only changes that we have made are the addition of some titles and ordering of the submissions. We like to keep the content straight from the horse's mouth, or so to speak. You don't have to be a grammarian or write for the NassLit to be included in our pages. All you have to be is human, and willing to share your thoughts and feelings with us.

We started this issue with two seasoned veterans (us, the co-editors-in-chief) and four excited freshmen--one of whom may or may not have joined just for the free cookies. The journey we have undertaken to bring you this masterpiece has been long and hard. Do you know how difficult it is for Princeton students to write using the prompt, "write anything you want"? It requires a certain amount of creativity, honesty, and time; the last of which is particularly rare to come by. In addition to written submissions, we are pleased to showcase a number of artworks that are thematically connected through the idea of dreams. Everything from simple household objects that have reoccured in a dream, to scenes are scattered throughout the pages of the journal.

So get started! Flip the page and peek into the minds of your peers who have so generously dedicated those three things to our humble endeavor. And who knows. Maybe one day you'll find yourself giving back and submitting a dream of your own as well.

PJ Love,

Handwritten signatures of Katrina Bushko and Melissa Kim. The signature on the left is 'Katrina Bushko' and the one on the right is 'Melissa Kim'.

Katrina Bushko '14 and Melissa Kim '13
Editors-in-Chief

Fall 2012

DREAM

I dreamed last night that I had a library full of Public Journals falling off my shelves and into my lap. And then I fell into a big black hole...



THE SPACE BENEATH MY EYELIDS

I am so sure of it, that I can be free: In this linked-by-webs world, I no longer have the gripping and ceaseless urge to track his visible motions. I can see pictures of him and be (mostly) unmoved. But sometimes I think of those moments again and I feel awful, and what could have been love for him overwhelms me and the space beneath my eyelids, and then I do love him, I love and miss him so much. What a selfish love it is! I always think it. I crave not him but his esteem; I care not for him but for his adoration. Yet what torture I put myself through, what torture I would put myself through again, to be near him and to have him see me and want me and feel me.

AWAY FROM HERE AND HIM

I'm tired and tired and tired. Maybe in a month, he'll like me. And I'm weak enough to wait. It's not that I like him, per se. It's never been that. I just wanted him to like me. Btu I forget the other universes that surround my own. He loves her still. And I'm nothing nothing nothing. I'm so busy today when all I want is to sleep until I decompose into my sheets and my brain turns to foam, and this perhaps is anguish and this perhaps is pain. Wish I had another cigarette. Wish for a lot of things. I need to find a job, far away from here and him.

CIGARETTE, WITH A CAPITAL C

Sometimes I wake up and I think about you. And then I really want a Cigarette.



A FOLLOW-UP

You may know me from my pfml post a while ago: “My best friend is going after a girl and tells me all about it. It wouldn’t be so bad if I didn’t actually like him. FML.” Well, here’s a follow-up of that story.

It was a cold autumn night, and we had just finished eating our qdoba burritos at my best friend’s surprise party. Everyone was itching to go to the street and have a few drinks before passing out on a Saturday. I hesitantly decided that I would stay in while he went to Tower, not really to do anything crazy... apparently there was a coffee get-together of some club members while the joint birthday and victory parties raged in the same house. So he left, shouting my name preceded by the three words that no best-friend-with-a-crush ever wants to jokingly hear (or if not jokingly, just not in the friend way). I turned to one of my roommates and told her how it was nice that he so thoroughly enjoyed the party that I gave, but how hard it was that I would never be that girl that he was always telling me about: how spunky she is, how good of a listener she is, how racially acceptable she is for him.

As the words left my mouth, a knock came at the door, and there he was, standing there. He beckoned me to go out with him. Even though Tower has gotten into the nasty habit of being on pass more often than not, he’d still get me in because it was his goddamn birthday. Reluctantly, I left, promising myself that I would only drink one cup of the honey-colored drink that looks so refreshing but is actually quite disgusting, in my opinion.

There was nothing eventful going on at Tower. I got in easily, for there were not many people hanging out in the coatroom (always a good indicator of how many people were in the club in total). So we grabbed a beer for me, talked to a few mutual friends -- many of whom gave my best friend birthday wishes -- and eventually went to the dance floor. We casually moved to the beat of the music, provided by a sub-par dj, and were soon joined by more mutual friends. After a while, one of those friends said that he was going to try and get into Cannon.

So we left, thinking that this friend was waiting outside for us. We stood on the sidewalk, and he texted one of his friends. All of a sudden, he says to me,

“I really want to call [girl he’s courting] right now.”

My heart stopped. This was the absolute worst possible thing that I could hear right then. I said nothing. I held back tears and thought to myself, Why am I not good enough?

The friend came out of Tower shortly afterward, and a slew of “I thought you were...”s were exchanged before we headed down the street, preparing to test our luck at half past one. We were soon faced with a warm rejection of “Members Only” by the enormous bouncers. I can’t exactly remember what was said that I reacted to so strangely, but I do remember that I opened my mouth to say something and quickly closed it with an uncomfortable look on my face. My best friend looked at me and asked if I was okay. All I could do was nod -- if I had actually opened my mouth to say yes, I probably would have burst into tears. So I stayed quiet for a while, while he was acutely aware that there was something very wrong with me.

On our way back to Frist and then to our rooms, he kept pestering. What’s wrong? What’s the matter? Are you sure you’re okay? I’m fine, I finally got the courage to say out loud. After we crossed Washington, he looked at me and said that we were going to sit down and I was going to tell him what was wrong. I just said no, not here. So we walked up to the front of Frist, where a guy was playing folk guitar and singing quite well. We stayed and listened for a few songs, then headed off into the rose garden on our way back to our respective bedrooms.

Those twenty or so yards were the most uncomfortable I had ever had with him. I kept trying to change the subject of my unhappiness to repeatedly saying that the singer was really good, or making sure that he enjoyed the party, or telling him that I shouldn't dump all of my problems on him when it was his birthday. The entire time, though, my head was spinning. I really couldn't bear to keep it from him. So we stopped right outside my building and I started my monologue.

"You want to know why I'm so upset? Shit can't get weird between us, okay? Well, it's just that you bring up [girl]'s name all the time and it's just weird that I'm helping to set you guys up, but I liked you freshman year and it's just weird and it's not cool and I just can't take it."

My less-than-articulate words spilled out of my mouth as I tried to escape my embarrassment by walking into my building's courtyard. When I stopped, he just looked at me and said that he knows that he's been going a little overboard with telling me all this stuff, but it was just that I was such a good friend...

"You don't get it, do you? Remember when I said that I usually fall for my closest guy friends? Well fuck me."

And with that, I turned from his bewildered face and entered my building. I practically ran up the three flights of stairs, trying not to cry. I encountered a girl who was in my freshman year politics precept, and with whom I was cordial. We exchanged some stupid little banter in the hallway as she waited for her friend to open the door. I told her to have a good night, passed two more doors, entered my room, and sat down in my desk chair.

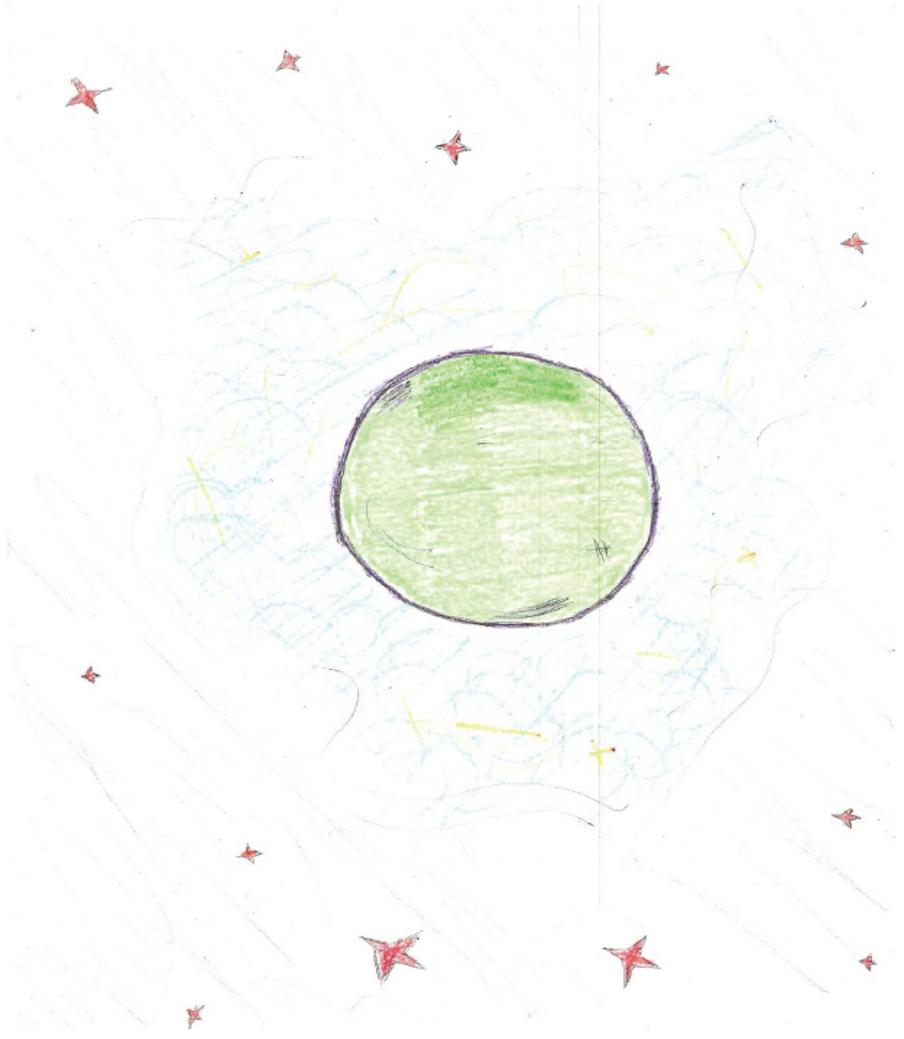
I cried. I don't think I had ever cried over a guy so much. I started shaking and wiped my nose on my sleeve, not remembering that a full box of tissues were on my bookcase less than two feet away. After I had myself a good cry, I texted my roommate to come home soon. I knew that she was not drunk and that she was helping her friends on tap duty that night. In the meantime, I stared at the wall for a long time, then decided to go to the bathroom, returning to sit on the couch and stare at the wall some more. I was numb.

When she got back, I recounted the whole story, which came as a slight shock, considering that I had never told her how I had liked my best friend. I thought it had stopped after freshman year, but with this persistent torture of listening to him talk about her after their first date, jokingly complain about how she was late to their second date, etc, I realized that I had never stopped liking him; all those other guys that I had "crushes" on were just ruses: me trying to convince myself that I could get over this boy, with whom I would be so happy. I could see myself spending the rest of my life with him: although he had already been tagged by my roommate as "high maintenance," I WANTED that. I wanted someone to count on me for their problems, and I expected the same in return. And the worst part was that I wasn't sad because I had told him how I felt; the worst part was that I knew that I had irreparably damaged our friendship.

So after some more crying, some hugging, and some more shaking, I finally calmed myself down enough to get into bed, close my eyes, and wish that I had never fucked this up in the first place.

ALONE

I've never felt so alone.



HATE AND LOVE

I hate the way you look at me every time we pass by each other—a brief expression of disgust when our eyes meet before averting your gaze to any direction but mine. I hate the way I think of you sometimes when I'm alone, reminiscing of days long past when your warmth would consume me. I hate the fact that the only way I could stop thinking of you was to lose myself in the arms of another. I hate the fact that when I finally stop thinking about you, you show up when I least expect it. I hate the fact that we haven't talked in months, yet the words of endearment remain on the tip of my tongue whenever your image pops up in my mind's eye. I hate that I don't know what you're thinking when I see you. I hate that I used to imagine you would show up at my door one day and everything would be all right, even though things were never quite that simple between us. I hate that I always had to approach you and you would never return the favor. I hate that I've lost the courage to be confident and assertive around you like in the good ol' days when I thought we had something real. I hate the fact that I was wrong, but I love the fact that I'm finally moving on.

KEEP ON KEEPIN' ON

So I should totally be freaking out because I'm cramming 5 weeks worth of readings into basically two nights, but then I remember that it's my own damn fault. So all I can do is suck it up and keep on keepin' on.

A HAIKU ABOUT THE MIDTERM STRUGGLE

didn't do readings,
napping to refresh the mind;
way overslept, fuck.



THE STRUGGLE

so I'm sitting here in McGraw, feet on desk, quite comfortable. Bottle of Tropicana within reach, headphones on but not connected to music, because honestly I just cannot focus with tunes, I start dancing almost immediately. I feel fatigued, but not exactly tired. Then again, it isn't even quite midnight yet, so the struggle hasn't even begun to set in. As I look around at the other students quietly reviewing old psets and stalking people on facebook, I'm realizing just how screwed I am for my midterms, and my thesis. Too many things swirling around in my head for me to devote all of my attention to this work right now. I hope he's thinking about me. I hope I didn't sound to stupid, she probably thinks I'm just really weird; I still want her to be like my best friend. Why can't I understand this material? I wish I was smarter. Damn it I really want candy right now. Okay this dude needs to really get out of my head. I just want to dance, is that so wrong? FUCK THIS, I'm taking a nap break.

the struggle will be on hold ...

INCONSIDERATE

Last night, I was writing a paper when I heard a group of people (about to go out) outside my room. They looked at my name board and started talking about how weird my name is. My name is Jameson.

WE'RE WORKING ON IT

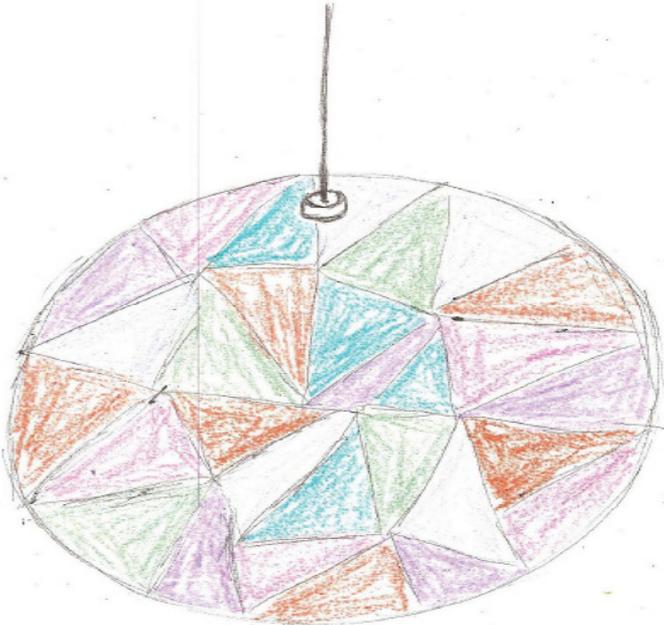
I wish I could see the two latest PJs online...

MURPHEY'S LAW

Oh, great! We hooked up the about a week ago and I've been waiting to see you ever since. The days following our hookup, in anticipation of our next encounter, I dressed nicely every day with my hair done and with flawless makeup. I looked great! I wore tights, boots, and a skirt everyday: the perfect, sexy fall look. Today I woke up feeling sick as I don't know what. Today I also woke up late and had no time to get ready so I threw on a crappy old-t-shirt and baggy jeans. I didn't even have time to wash my face or comb my hair. Today was the first time that we've seen each other since that night. Why couldn't we have encountered each other last week when I looked great? I looked so terrible, and also felt miserable, today and I don't know how to interpret the face you made when our eyes met.

EVERYONE IS ENTITLED TO AN OPINION

Tomorrow I drive across the country to begin my summer internship. I'm as excited about it as I've ever been about a summer opportunity, but I'm afraid that, because it is a political job, I'm now labelled as a specific person. Explaining it to people who might be of an opposing political stance is very difficult to me; I hate how politics alienates people. It is too important and influential to ignore, but I don't know how to deal with the fact that I'm now on the map. I'm now part of yet another division, another group, another category. I'd rather not be "a Democrat." I'd rather be a person with specific opinions.



ELECTIONS!

I don't care if Romney can fix the economy quicker than Obama. Obama has gotten so many social issues resolved and if Romney gets to be president, our country will only go backwards in that respect. I still have hope. OBAMA 2012.

If Romney wins, I swear to God, I will be upset.

I feel like Obama will win, although to be honest, both are pretty terrible candidates. Somehow, all the work I've been doing recently made me almost forget that elections were coming up...

1% RAP AKA NEW MONEY

My friend asked me how being without a God doesn't pain me, Narcissism, egotism, hedonism sustain me

The Army recruiter told me to be all that you can be
So I said I'll go to Wall Street, earn a million, two, or three
I'll have cash out the ass and give none to the poor,
But give a million to Congress to start a new war,
Send the masses to die for a few dollars more,
And have the lower class living even worse than before

I'm just a rugged individual with diamonds and pearls,
A new master of the universe, this brave new world,
I said fuck the lower class, don't give a damn about their rent Cause I'm
spending my whole life in the upper one percent.

One day I got dragged to church and asked a priest about my soul,
He said eternal life's worth far more than its weight in silver, gold
I said, gee father, heaven and salvation sound awfully nice
But everything in this material world has its own price.
And while wars are fought over a single grain of fucking rice,
I sit in Monte Carlo with my hands rolling a pair of dice
Just won and lost more than most people earn during their whole lives
God damn it's nice to live above the proletarian strife.

I'm just a rugged individual with diamonds and pearls,
A new master of the universe, this brave new world,
I said fuck the lower class, don't give a damn about their rent Cause I'm
spending my whole life in the upper one percent.

I'm a credentialist, an Ivy Leaguer, grade snob and tool
I'll start a trillion-dollar bubble if the public thinks it's cool
People who break their backs with labor are all being played for fools
As my lazy friends and I establish oligarchic rule.
The market's up, the market's down, no matter what, we all win
At best, the public steps up to the wheel of fortune and spins
A tiny chance of riches, a big chance of life in ruins
All to finance the elite as we pursue a life of sin.

I'm just a rugged individual with diamonds and pearls,
A new master of the universe, this brave new world,
I said fuck the lower class, don't give a damn about their rent Cause
I'm spending my whole life in the upper one percent.
No one man should have all that power
So we spread it out amongst ninety-five thousand
Gaining global domination hour by hour
Looking down at the masses from the ivory tower.

SOUNDS STRANGE TO ME

This isn't strange, but I got caught outside in the middle of Beijing's biggest rainstorm in over sixty years and fell into a ditch.



WHAT CHICKENS TOUCH

Sometimes I watch and wonder about this question endlessly, “what chickens touch?” and I realize it sounds stupid and silly and so many other things but really it’s one of the questions I’ve always been trying to answer, like how I always am never satisfied, how I always want more. Does that mean I’m greedy, that I’m a bad person.

I'm famous for using salt. I love salty things. I used to secretly put salt in my food at home when no one was looking. It's so good. Part of that has to be evolutionary, loving salt because it our bodies needed it. I mean, deer like salt, right? And besides, back in the day, people used salt as trading material. I love salt. In high school, I swear, I was the only one who took the little salt packets that they had at the end of the lunch line. I added it on everything. A single hash brown, one piece of crispy brown potato 2 inches wide, 3 inches long, and a quarter of an inch high, required at least two packets of salt. My friends told me it looked like powdered sugar. The soup, usually some sort of recooked Campbell's, which normally has already 40% of your recommended daily intake of sodium, required two or three packets of salt. Steamed vegetables, one serving...that required two more packets of salt.

It wasn't that I didn't know salt was bad for you. I was fully aware that it could lead to cardiovascular problems like high blood pressure. But it was like a drug, quite literally. I needed more and more of it, and salt made me happy. It was like my tolerance for salt was increasing every day. I knew that I needed to stop, though. I didn't have high blood pressure. Quite the opposite, actually. Not low blood pressure, but borderline low. But add high salt intake to my lack of exercise and extremely fatty diet (those hash browns that I loved were so oily that they sometimes stuck to the paper plate even after I flipped it over) and I was sure that I'd die in a few years. So occasionally, I took salt diets. I'd go for a week, or once, even a month, without adding any extra salt to my diet. But then I'd always go back.

I got quite a reputation. In tenth grade, my English teacher gave me a salt shaker (filled) that she found when she was cleaning her room. As a graduation present, my friends got me a huge paper bag filled with the little salt packets that I took from the lunch line. I didn't count, but there must have been several hundred packets. They had grabbed handfuls of them every day from the lunch line for a month. At the end of summer camp last year, my friends gave me a salt shaker they took from the cafeteria. Somehow, so many of my presents have involved salt.

This year, I started college and promised to myself that I'd be healthier. No more salt. I tried. Kind of. But it was too hard. Princeton puts so many salt grinders on each table. It's so tempting. So I caved in and started using salt again. This girl in my zee group noticed quite early that I use a lot of salt, and started putting salt into my milk when I left the table to get more food. I'd come back, and my milk would be salty. Having to dump out my milk and get a fresh drink is annoying. I like salt, but not in things like milk or Coke. I'll try to use less salt. We'll see how that lasts, and I'll keep you updated.

QUESTIONS

1. Kelsey clarkson
2. Piano
3. "And you miss are no lady, but don't think I hold that against you. Ladies have never held any charm for me"
Sent from my iPhone

TURN UP THE VOLUME, AND STRUT

When you're walking outside with your headphones in and you can't help but let a casual fart seep out, how do you know if the person walking behind you heard it? As far as you know, it could've been a thunderous cheek flapper, and you'd never hear it over those tunes you were jamming to. Or worse, what if they smelt it?! You could've unleashed an SBD -- a rank stink bomb waiting for your follower to cross into its minefield. Do you acknowledge? Could they really know it was you? Do you bask in your ignorance? Do you put your head down and move along? No. You stand proud, turn up the volume one more notch, and strut. Because for all you know, you just let off a 10.

LET ME TELL YOU EVERYTHING THAT IS WRONG WITH ME

Let me tell you everything that is wrong with me.

I don't like people, but I almost always feel lonely.

I never have anything to say, about anything.

At any point in time, I'd rather be sleeping than doing anything else.

When I think, seriously, about my impending death, I get panic attacks.

I don't like my body, but don't care enough to do anything about it.

I am significantly less intelligent and less experienced than everyone else in my major, which means I'm probably not going to get a job after I graduate.

I don't care about my parents. I don't hate them, I just don't care about them.

I don't think anyone would ever find me attractive, or interesting.

I'm not interesting.

I don't really think there's a point to anything.

I don't want to die alone, but I know I probably will.

I wish I could be happy.

FILLING, WITHOUT JOY

I've lost the pure joy of eating. I feel like I'm shoving food in my mouth just to fill my stomach with something so I don't feel like I'm starving. I'm tired. I'm overwhelmed.

WHO DO I MISS RIGHT NOW?

who do i miss right now?

i miss the old me.....before i became supremely obese and
couldn't recognize myself in the mirror
i miss the old me....who thought she was fat but really wasn't...
not the new me who doesn't think she is fat but really is



LIFE GOES ON

“No, nevermind. You weren’t even paying attention the first time.” I have that thought so often here. Too disappointed to repeat myself. Too emotionally on-end to care.

“No please tell me.” I look up at him to see the light filtered at an angle through his eyelashes. His eyes are joyful, anticipating...something? I think I see a glimpse of who he was as a kid—as careless and envied as he is now. But now there is also the magnetism of charisma.

I finish up the conversation as I should. Perfunctory, like everything else on this campus. Never sufficing, filling. Never challenging or being challenged.

And life goes on. He walks away, with the slightest swagger of an athlete. Short sleeves in the 40 degree weather. Comfortable, as he always is. Not looking back, not pondering, only always lost in thought in the most uncomplicated way.

Why am I seeking that comfort and yet running away from it? How can I be running away when I am standing still, watching him leave?

PRINCETON CHANGES YOU

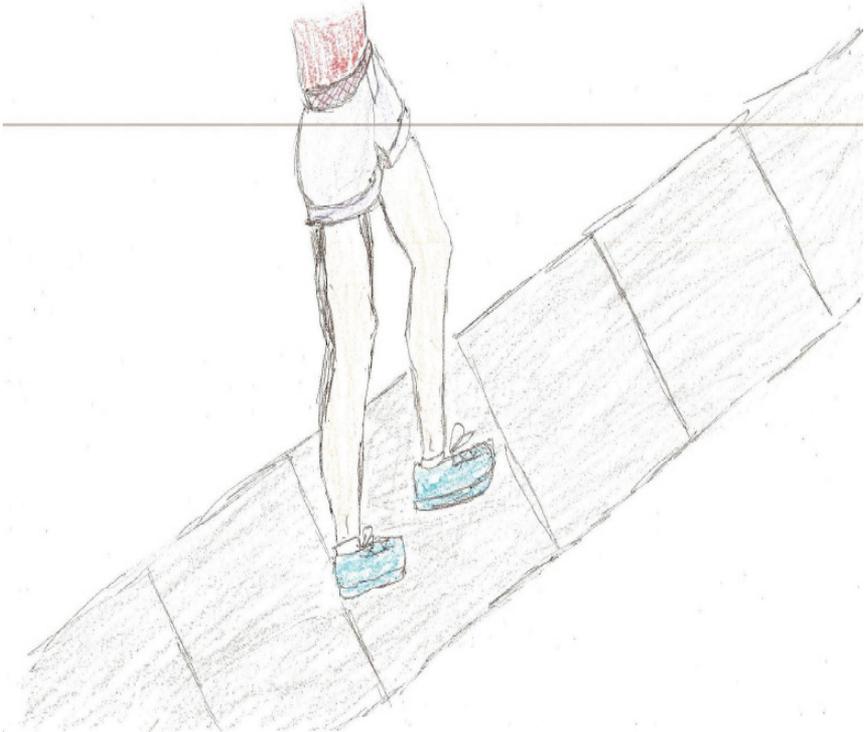
I feel myself becoming more and more boy-crazy every day. This isn't the pre-Princeton me.

PREFROSH WEEKEND 2012

1. Dreamer: Someday, I'd like to wake up and realize that boys are not douches
2. I want to ask who plays League, but I don't want to pop the question
3. I was scared Princeton would be too white
4. I'm really scared of having roommates in college because then I can't fart aloud.
5. I wish I had figured it out sooner
6. I care too much about what other people think.
7. Princeton is great! YAYS!
8. I am so excited to go to Princeton!
9. I do things in sets of three. When I don't I feel like something terrible will happen. I hope it isn't OCD.
10. I secretly stalk DiSiac on YouTube and found out the name of one of the dancers (who's amazing). No shame.
11. I am scared to death about school!
12. can't ride a bike
13. I wish I could be more unique sometimes
14. I'm afraid everyone is smarter than me!
15. Today I got lost on four separate occasions
16. I <3 Pton! =)
17. I miss him
18. I think I'm going to Yale -- but I realize what I'm giving up, and it's killing me. -'16
19. I'm actually shy
20. Sometimes... I pretend I'm pretty
21. I'm not going to Princeton
22. I am so impressed by this university and I think I'll love it a lot. I'm excited to attend. But in the back of my mind I can't escape how pretentious it still feels, and can't help desiring to undermine that pretension.
23. I like pies.

COLD FEET

the only reason why i'll be leaving cafe viv today is to go warm up my feet.



STUDY ABROAD

I am so excited to study abroad. So freaking excited you have no idea. I mean, I will miss my family and my friends, of course. But what I will not miss is the Princeton Pressure. I never thought that I'd say it, but I am so glad that it's winter break, I am home, and I don't have to think about working on my JP (which I have not even begun), writing a final paper, and studying for two tests, until after Christmas.

This study abroad opportunity will not only allow me to get away from the Pressure, but it will also allow me to revamp myself. I plan on losing weight, getting mentally (and possibly spiritually?) healthy, and overall just taking a break from the run run run of American life. For most of my life, I thought that it was the constant moving in my life that kept me semi-sane. I couldn't dream of not going to countless meetings to keep me from drowning myself in academics. After getting a campus job, I still don't understand people who don't try to get every shift they possibly can. It's crazy. It's easy money, people! On top of that, I hold a leadership position in most of the organizations that I'm a part of. But now, as I prepare to study on the other side of the ocean, all I can think about is how much better my life will be: going to class for a few hours a days, doing my homework, chatting with friends, going to the gym, then going to sleep. NOT working at a job until the wee hours of the morning or running from meeting to meeting, hoping that something tangible will result in my tireless efforts to the organization. I'm sure that the campus I at which I will be studying has a vast array of extra curriculars, but for once in my life, I have a very valid reason to say NO! That is not my dear, dear Princeton (I do still love this place, regardless of the Pressure), and I have no obligation to serve the student body in any capacity... I'll only be there for one semester!

But, sigh, knowing myself, I will probably plunge headfirst into every extra curricular opportunity that tickles my fancy. I just really hope that they have a crappy selection and that I will be uninterested in all organizations, so that I will be forced away from everything. I can only hope.

SATURDAY NIGHT JOURNAL

How has your night been going?

Happy

My night has been fantastic we had some initiations rituals and just had a great time with friends :) that's what it is all about... Friends <3

You guys are lovely

My night has been great so far I got to spend time with a lot of different people and it has been a lot of fun

Amazing!

My face! My face is so hot!

Hi I'm a math major. I wish I could have skills like you guys

I'm having a really good time with my friends

No these jeans are toooo looong

I'LL NEVER TELL

You'll never know this but after each time we hang out, I can't stop smiling for five minutes.



THE CRITICAL THEORY OF FACEBOOK STATUSES

I'm never sure about posting facebook statuses about serious issues. Facebook has a way of trivializing meaning, and the act of posting transforms and packages the message into something presentable, filtered by deliberation. But then, how does one tactfully publicize anything that one means authentically? The fear of the potential adulteration discourages me. Then again, maybe it's better to let loose the message or opinion - leaving it exposed in whatever form it takes - than never to speak at all.

TROUBLE

I can't stop looking at him. I am in terrible trouble.

THE CUTE REDHEAD IN GERMAN

The problem of the cute redhead in my German class. Simple solution (Just ask her for coffee!) if not for the complexity of the issue (Niggling desire to tell her, 'You have lovely freckled arms'). The arms because are the only bare part of her body I've seen besides her face. Which is also lovely. Similarly freckled. Anything would be better than admitting lunacy ('Hey, I want you to eat hot schnitzel with cranberry sauce off my abs') but little would be worse than the truth ('Hey, I am in love with a young woman in Germany, but I still want to buy you coffee such that while we are standing in line you will say words [any words] to me with your shapely mouth') waiting naked under my mendacious tongue.

BEAUTIFULER AND PERFECTER

You made me cry so much that weekend.

Your pheromones (or whatever) are so strong I can just stay here forever. Right beside you but not touching. So emotionally present I am overflowing. Your face is beautiful and perfect. Beautifuler and perfecter than I remember. Is it because you've matured since the last time? Or because I've finally forgiven you? I know you feel so much, but why won't you tell me (more)? Why do I have to confront and coerce and beg and make things sloppy? Why did you waste your time on all those people who don't have the capacity to care? Why do you want?

Clear, blue, and perfect, just like that country bumpkin on that one show. I never went for that type, I thought. Your walk-on-to-the-crew-team callouses, the visible price of fitting in? Of excelling at fitting in? What innocence have you lost (or pain have you taken on?) for this most innocent attempt to escape the quotidian pains?

Why can't you go here? And hurt me constantly so that I can finally experience something again.

THE MOMENT OF TRUTH

The moment of truth: you like him, and you think he likes you too, and so you take a deep breath, and you ask where this is going, and he tells you that this is going nowhere. And your stomach plummets.

He tells you that he can't for personal reasons, and you nod and say that you understand. But just for a little while longer you linger, curled around him, his arms around you. You don't want to leave. To get up is to close the door on what could have been, to stay just friends with a hug and a kiss on the cheek. To get up is to say goodbye.

Well, you do get up, and he does too, and you go to bed, and he goes to bed, but not the same bed. You have left him behind, or maybe he has left you behind. You don't know which is the truth. You cannot say for sure who is at fault here: you, or him, or both.

You begin to wonder if you have made it all up. He seems so sure, so certain, that nothing will happen. He tells you he never meant to hold your hand, or pet your hair, or tuck you into his side. He tells you he shouldn't have acted that way. He tells you he got carried away. He tells you he wants to be friends. And he tells you all this without hesitation, without a question. You begin to doubt yourself. Did he ever really like you? Have you misread the signs all along? Have you made it all up?

The insecurity which lingers constantly in your gut begins to rise. It tells you, like it always does, that you are nothing special. It tells you, like it always does, that you are fat and stupid and ugly. It tells you, like it always does, that you are not good enough. You listen to it. You tell yourself, *I have been a fool*.

It hurts a little. You listen to music that reminds you of him. You take a walk in the rain. You cry, from frustration and the emotional hangover that pricks at your skin. You wipe your eyes and tell yourself to get over it. You ask yourself, what is there to be sad about? There is nothing to grieve here, no relationship ended, no trust broken.

You think back. He only smiled at you, you think. You only made him laugh. But he danced with you too, and you read poetry with him. He held your hand, and you held his. You played with the nape of his neck, and he pet your hair. He tucked you into his side, and you curled up close, your head against his chest.

This, too, is a moment of truth: you realize all over again that there is something there between you and him, however vague and undefined it may be, and you realize, too, that it will always go left unsaid.

It hurts a lot.

MOMENT OF CLARITY

Sometimes things seem really simple. So simple that I can see exactly how they ought to be. For one night, or one day, or one weekend, all the pieces just fit together and I know what I want and I start to think that maybe I can have it.

But in the end, things are never simple.

OH THE PLACES YOU'LL GO

As usual, I don't have any idea where I'm going.
Yet.



NOTE TO THE EDITOR

I think you guys just wrote on my whiteboard outside my single. Sadly, or not, that was probably the best thing that's happened to me today! At any rate, I don't really know what to do with your message. I looked at your site and your last publication and I'm sort of interested. On the one hand, it seems a little frivolous and angst-laden, to be honest, but on the other hand it seems pretty honest in a lot of ways. I'm not particularly interested in contributing, but is there a staff I can try to join or something? Sorry if this is not the right way to go about this.

Be well.





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