

sun flower 2.0

“I think I’ll be a clown when I get grown,” said Dill. “Yes, sir, a clown.... There ain’t one thing in this world I can do about folks except laugh, so I’m gonna join the circus and laugh my head off.” “You got it backwards, Dill,” said Jem. “Clowns are sad, it’s folks that laugh at them.”

“Well, I’m gonna be a new kind of clown. I’m gonna stand in the middle of the ring and laugh at the folks.”

敢

Several lists of interest

I like looking at maps, plates that used to be filled with food, oil derricks and good examples of print design.

I like flowers, bed hair, rabbits, parrots, yams, computers, blowing my nose, waking up early, going to sleep late, leg warmers, wearing see-through clothing, baking, cooking unhealthy food, reading, design, watching TV while eating, listening to incredibly repetitive music, responding with sarcasm, and buying house decor.

I dislike hunger, mean people, tan lines, seafood enclosed within shells, being bored, illogical people, being home alone, clingy people, uncultured people, hanging out with people I don't really care about, apathy, baggy clothing on men, dogs, cats, venomous animals, hype, hipsters.

I like watching foreign horror films, Amelie, The Dark Knight, Pride and Prejudice, How I Met Your Mother, The Big Bang Theory and Ghibli films.

I like reading Vladimir Nabokov and Haruki Murakami, existential plays and picture books.

I like listening to Claude Debussy, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, Yoshida Brothers, Florrie, Christina Aguilera, capsule, Maroon 5, Massive Attack, Benny Benassi, Kanye West, Late Night Alumni and Bob Marley.

I want to live in Singapore, New York City and Los Angeles (all at once.) I want to work at the MIT Media Lab, as the editor-in-chief of a big magazine and as an artist.

I love carbs, Chipotle, In-n-Out, Lollicup, fried foods – but above all, I love Persian food.

I hate dreaming.

I love my father and I love Rusty.

I am rather anthropophilous.

look how stylish I am

being voted into the style section was obviously the pinnacle of my highschool career



Up:

DKNY cardigan, Obey
tanktop, Lufthansa
Airline pants, Tiffany
and Co. ring

Down:

H&M Furry hat, Lacoste
Cardigan, H&M sheer
tank top, Native
American necklace





My father's influence

I've found inspiration in many places in my life: Yousuf Karsh for portraiture, Haruki Murakami for writing, and Polyphemus for adventurous eating... but the one figure who has truly shaped my life is a bit closer to home.

My father is an astrophysicist and his mind is always in the sky. When I was younger, 75 percent of the time he would be out of the house, on a plane to the Keck Observatory in Hawaii or Puerto Rico's Arecibo. Astronomy made sure I was fatherless at all of my birthday parties. Passion for astronomy made all other matters in the home secondary for him.

Instead of focusing on his absence, I became star-struck with my father's life style. I've heard the stories of him staying up night after night to find the first Brown Dwarf ("which is either a super planet or a sub-stellar

object" he says). I knew of his midnight phone calls of a recent Gamma Ray Burst or some other glimmer of light. Somehow, those distant celestial bodies that were in fact pulsars, spastica novae, and the deaths of massive stars, would stir something deep within him.

And when he finally returned home from where ever, I could see that "something" in his gaze while he grueled over his latest paper. My father exists with his work on another astral plane of existence, perhaps in another universe science has yet to discover. However, despite the fact that all attempts to make conversation with him while he works merely yield the response "uh huh" at 10-second intervals, I will always be in awe of his work ethic. Jet-lagged he may be, but after a hot bath, two hours after he lands from Frankfurt, he's working. Saturday, Sunday,

weekends too. Even when we went on a family vacation, he took his battered laptop with him. Only the beautiful Hawaiian sunset distracted him for a couple of minutes before he started typing again.

Somehow my father worked a miracle on me; his lack of affection towards me contrasted by his great love for astronomy, instead of hurting me, inspired me. I acquired my bright source of motivation by learning from my father's example. I grew up with a man who poured his life into the sky, a man who fell so hopelessly in love with the stars.

I grew up wanting the same for myself.

And so in high school, I found my own sky and stars to immerse myself in: Yearbook. Yearbook opened up impossible doors for me, it propelled me forward from a shy freshman to a confident Editor-in-Chief. It taught me to speak, whether it be to teachers or to more physically intimidating figures like football players. It taught me that a pica was 1/6 of an inch, that producing 1150 yearbooks required our staff to raise \$94,354.55, that the Oxford comma should not be used in journalistic publications, and that how, from a clutter of articles and photos, a beautiful spread could be born. But first and foremost, it taught me to work.

Though on any staff member's schedule Yearbook is listed as a 55 minute class, I quickly realized that our 300+ page yearbook needed more commitment than that. This negatively impacted my social life. But that didn't matter; I found solace in front of the blank white screens of writer's block. I felt right at home when inspiration and the rhythm of my words flowed. For once, it was me who was typing furiously.

And so for all my high school, yearbook became my life. I wrote articles and had them returned to me slaughtered with red ink. I ran after reluctant interviewees. I stayed after school, cropping photos, writing captions, finishing spreads. Though I wasn't a staff photographer, I filled in at events. And a haze of work-filled days later, I soon became the one holding the red pen. But as I rose to Editor-in-Chief-in-Training, I had new difficulties. I had to accept a frightening idea: I couldn't do all the work myself. Instead, I would have to stand in front of 38 students everyday and somehow inspire them to work. But in the mean time, deadlines were deadlines. I coordinated writers and photographers. I stayed at "work-night" long enough to learn that the school hallways are pitch-black at 4 a.m., and I remembered staff

members' birthdays, anything to make sure that everything happened. And it did.

Our yearbook, the Titanian, has earned the rank of "All-American" (the highest rank given by the National Scholastic Press Association.) Every year our staff produces a beautiful book, a book which I loved through all of the dark times of tense all nighters, Red Bull, less-than-stellar grades in my other classes, and all the bright times: cheery moments in the sun at Yearbook Camp, Secret Santa and staff potlucks... being surrounded by the people I love. Through every swirl of caffeinated nights, I have never regretted this class. Because it is so much more than a class to me.

My friends call me a lame "yerd" (yearbook nerd) when I excitedly discuss yearbook, but behind their "jk"s, I know they're not entirely kidding. For some reason, apathy has become the new cool. They say I have no life, but I don't care. It was my father who taught me that loving your passion with abandon was not only acceptable, but in fact the only way to truly live.

At the same time, sometimes the intense taptaptap of my father's industrious typing is alienating. Is there any room for me in his world of stars, numbers and spectral explosions? With his eyes always ablaze with the light of nebulae from long ago, will he ever think of me? I don't know. Probably not. But what I do know is: there exists a universe where astronomy and yearbook converge, a place where my dad and I live for the same cause. And when I've had my last straw of panicked 2 a.m. deadlines, when it's hard to approach the class and blink away the tears of "We have 48 pages due and no one finished their work...", when I see 38 disinterested unhappy students instead of united staffers, I think of my dad. I remember why I'm doing all of this. For our starry sky. There he is, working into the night, his mind in the depths of outer space, reaching, reaching, reaching. For something breathtaking. For something out of this world. That's why.

budding

To the world, I fiercely blossom. I am the fullest rose, with thick, heavy petals.

I am red.
I am thorns.
I am boiling blood.

I turn up to the sky in anger, and I challenge the sun.

The world sees my red.

But the world does not see what you see.

I feel you approach.

To you,
to you
I crumple.

And for you,
for you
I unfold myself.

The reds fall to the ground.
My dewy lips part.
And I close my eyes.

Dreaming.

I emerge, pink, soft as newborn flesh
and I
tremble
for your touch.

And for you I lay
unfurled, unprotected, vulnerable

I am child.
I am blush.
I am snow

after the first snow fall. Untouched.

To you, I hide nothing,
my sky
my wind
my rain

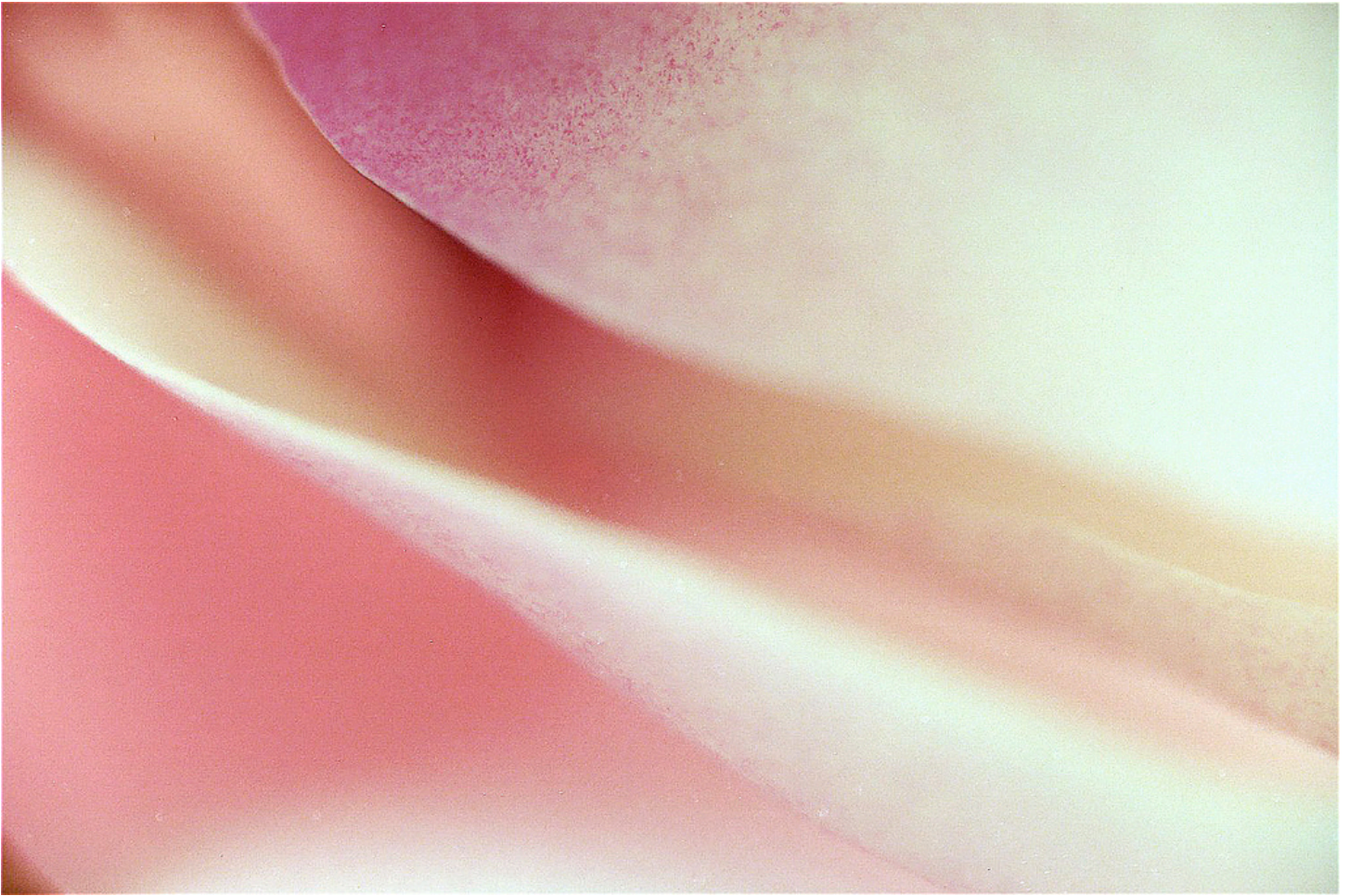
my everything.

Can't you see me wait
I dream of you
I tremble and
I sigh

I long for your rains
for your gentle touch

to skim my pastel
quivering lips

to brush my moist
my wet
eyelids.



to melt this winter
and to breathe your
warm
soft
dripping
sweet
life
inside of me

I yearn.

I yearn.

And I wait,
unfurled and bare
shuddering in the wind

for you.

(my father)

My Booklist

2008

- 01 *The Interpreter* : Suzi Kim
- 02 *Dance Dance Dance* : Murakami Haruki
- 03 *Hercolobos or the RED PLANET* : V.M.Rabolu
- 04 *The Wind-up Bird Chronicles* : Murakami Haruki
- 05 *Amerika* : Franz Kafka
- 06 *The Meaning of It All* : Richard P. Feynman
- 07 *Feynman's Rainbow* : Leonard Mlodinow
- 08 *A Long Way Gone* : Ishmael Beah
- 09 *Beautiful Boy* : David Sheff
- 10 *Norwegian Wood* : Murakami Haruki
- 11 *Imperial Ambitions* : Noam Chomsky
- 12 *The Elephant Vanishes* : Murakami Haruki
- 13 *The Wild Sheep Chase* : Murakami Haruki
- 14 *The History of Love* : Nicole Krauss
- 15 *The Kitchen God's Wife* : Amy Tan
- 16 *Odyssey* : Homer, Trans. Stanley Lombardo
- 17 *The Man Who Loved Only Numbers* : Paul Hoffman
- 18 *The Illustrated Man* : Ray Bradbury
- 19 *Children's Island* : P. C. Jersild
- 20 *The Charisma Campaigns* : Jack Matthews
- 21 *To Kill a Mocking Bird* : Harper Lee
- 22 *1984* : George Orwell
- 23 *Serve the People!* : Yan Lianke
- 24 *After Dark* : Murakami Haruki
- 25 *Rhinoceros & Other Plays* : Eugène Ionesco
- 26 *South of the Border, West of the Sun* : Murakami Haruki
- 27 *Next* : Michael Crichton
- 28 *Animal Farm* : George Orwell
- 29 *The Crucible* : Arthur Miller
- 30 *Out* : Natsuo Kirino
- 31 *All She Was Worth* : Miyuki Miyabe
- 32 *Thank you and Okay!* : David Chadwick
- 33 *God is Dead* : Ron Currie Jr.
- 34 *Sons and Lovers* : D. H. Lawrence
- 35 *Angela's Ashes* : Frank McCourt
- 36 *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius* : Dave Eggers
- 36 *Just Listen* : Sarah Dessen
- 37 *How to Be Decadent* : George Mikes
- 38 *Tsi-Tsa: The Biography of a Cat* : George Mikes
- 39 *Twilight* : Stephenie Meyer

40 *Hard-boiled Wonderland and The End of the World* : Haruki Murakami

41 *Sex and the City* : Candance Bunshell

42 *After the Quake* : Haruki Murakami

2009

- 01 *Magic Steps* : Tamora Pierce
- 02 *Birdy* : William Wharton
- 03 *Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist* : Rachel Cohn, David Levithan
- 04 *Fight Club* : Chuck Palahniuk
- 05 *The Great Fuckin' Gatsby* : F. Scotty Fitz
- 06 *Stop, Don't Stop* : Jonah Black
- 07 *Run Jonah Run* : Jonah Black
- 08 *Faster Faster Faster* : Jonah Black
- 09 *The Friday Night Knitting Club* : Kate Jacobs
- 10 *Q & A* : Vikas Swarup
- 11 *Confessions of a Shopaholic* : Sophie Kinsella
- 12 *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* : Mark Haddon
- 13 *Girls of Riyadh* : Rajaa Alsanea
- 14 *Of Mice and Men* : John Steinbeck
- 15 *The Glass Menagerie* : Tennessee Williams
- 16 *Slaughterhouse Five* : Kurt Vonnegut
- 17 *A Long Way Down* : Nick Hornby
- 18 *Breakfast at Tiffany's* : Truman Capote
- 19 *The Godfather* : Mario Puzo
- 20 *Vegan Virgin Valentine* : Carolyn Mackler
- 21 *Peony* : Pearl. S. Buck
- 22 *Pride and Prejudice* : Jane Austen
- 23 *Endgame and Act Without Words* : Samuel Beckett
- 24 *Cat's Cradle* : Kurt Vonnegut
- 25 *The Soloist* : Steve Lopez
- 26 *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* : Lewis Carroll
- 27 *Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There* : Lewis Carroll
- 28 *No Limit* : Pete Hautman
- 29 *andy warhol prince of pop* : Jan Greenberg & Sandra Jordan
- 30 *Sputnik Sweetheart* : Haruki Murakami
- 31 *New Moon* : Stephenie freakin' Meyers
- 32 *Looking for Alaska* : John Green

- 33 *All Quiet on the Western Front* : Erich Maria Remarque
- 34 *Crunch Time* : Mariah Fredericks
- 35 *The Importance of Being Earnest* : Oscar Wilde
- 36 *Lolita* : Vladimir Nabokov
- 37 *On the Road* : Jack Kerouac
- 38 *A Farewell to Arms* : Earnest Hemmingway

2010

- 01 *The Death of Ivan Ilych* : Leo Tolstoy
- 02 *The Mating Season* : P.G. Wodehouse
- 03 *Shoplifting from American Apparel* : Tao Lin
- 04 *Laughter in the Dark* : Vladimir Nabokov
- 05 *The Diary of a Young Girl* : Anne Frank
- 06 *Things Fall Apart* : Chinua Achebe
- 07 *Paper Towns* : John Green
- 08 *Birthday Stories* : Haruki Murakami
- 09 *Brave New World* : Aldous Huxley
- 10 *Great Expectations* : Charles Dickens
- 11 *Silas Marner* : George Elliot
- 12 *Doctor Faustus* : Christopher Marlowe
- 13 *Up in the Air* : Walter Kim
- 14 *Girlfriend Material* : Melissa Kantor
- 15 *The Metamorphosis* : Franz Kafka
- 16 *Richard Yates* : Tao Lin
- 17 *The Stranger* : Albert Camus
- 18 *Oedipus the King* : Sophocles trans. Robert Fagles
- 19 *Death of a Salesman* : Arthur Miller
- 20 *A Midsummer's Night Dream* : William Shakespeare

2011

- 01 *Nocturnes* : Kazuo Ishiguro
- 02 *Othello* : William Shakespeare
- 03 *A Shore Thing* : Nicole Snooki Polizzi
- 04 *Their Eyes Were Watching God* : Zora Neale Hurston
- 05 *Doll's House* : Henrik Ibsen
- 06 *Gruesome Playground Injuries, Animals Out of Paper, Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo* : Rajiv Joseph
- 07 *Pygmalion* : George Bernard Shaw
- 08 *Equus* : Peter Schaffer
- 09 *Frankenstein* : Mary Shelley

My room is filled with photographs, floral-inspired trinkets, cameras and... books. I am quite the book snob. I will judge you and I will judge you mercilessly if you ever never heard of Kafka or have no intention of reading *Pride and Prejudice* in your life. I always liked reading, but in High School I really started to branch out and it was probably one of the things that kept me sane (and also encouraged me to go insane, the more I think about it). Reading opened up so many doors for me- ideas, thought processes, inspiration, things that I had never even CONSIDERED in my life. Definitely the one author that has inspired me the most would be Haruki Murakami. His works are all very dreamy, have the dry subtlety of Japanese humor and can fucking change your life. Anyways, if you want to know what I've been reading (so I will think more highly of you if we read similar things), here's my booklist.



For more booklist reviews and in-depth analysis, see the following page.

Select Book Reviews

2008.09

I know it's supposed to be touching and stuff, the drug struggles of a son and his dad's pain... but this book sucked. Really.

2008.29

I love this play. John Proctor is amazing. He is my hero. This play is beautifully intense and I recommend it to anyone with a brain.

2008.34

This book was painful. I told myself I would finish it, so I did. 500 pages of my life wasted. I don't even know what this book is about anymore. Some guy and his abysmal life. Why is he famous?

2008.41

This book is dark, witty and sarcastic (nothing like the TV show). I was pleasantly surprised. It's a bit mature though, so it's not a book for a young kid or anything.

2009.02

Mrs. Steece actually recommended this book to me and I borrowed it from her (after I told her about Haruki Murakami stuff), It's actually really really good. It's rather offbeat though, which isn't a bad thing... but just saying. This book really explores themes of "the mind" and deterioration and dreams and delusions, etc. Lots of D words.

2009.09

Don't read this book it's pretty bad. Unless you like.. knitting combined with soap operas.

2009.10

Slumdog Millionaire was based off of this book. So if you liked the movie, I guess I'd recommend it. The book is grittier though btw.

2009.12

'Twas a nice book this was! This book is written from the POV of an autistic boy. It's incredibly well written and very enjoyable. It was hard to put down!

2009.13

The book itself is rather mediocre in the sense of it's like Gossip Girl except set in.. Saudi Arabia. Which therefore makes it interesting because Gossip Girl really doesn't culturally translate with Islamic culture does it? Basically, an interesting book (if you think about it) but nothing stunning in terms of literary anything or plot.

2009.17

I thought this book was rather awful... Well. If you're into the whole a-group-of-strangers-coincidentally-meet-and-form-this-wierd-support-group thing, this book is for you. Me? That sort of thing just creeps me out.

2009.18

Worth reading purely because it's a classic. But actually, most copies of the book includes several other short stories by Capote, and my favourite one is called The House of Flowers.

2009.20

I read this book in one day because I didn't have an SSR book. It's AWFUL. Well, I didn't have high expectations anyways, just from the title. Also, be very suspicious when the author's name sounds like "mackerel".

2009.21

The historical content of this book is super interesting and the writing is pleasant. Did you know that Jewish people lived in China? I didn't. I'd recommend this book for the historical depth and it's a pretty pleasant read. You also get plus points because this book is sort of old.

2009.22

SPEAKING OF plus points for a "sort of old" book, this one is REALLY sort of old! I LOVED it though. Whatever dumbasses who say it's boring or "hard to understand" should really just go and grow a freaking brain. The writing is incredibly eloquent. The dialogue is witty and makes you feel intelligent. It's also a lovely

love story! Read this book or else you suck. Seriously.

2009.23

A rather interesting existential play. It's rather short. And it's seriously interesting. If you ever feel intelligent, you should read it.

2009.27

Here's my original review of it written earlier in the year: Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There (by Lewis Carroll) are by far, the best summer reading. Ever. Period. I highly recommend San Marino Public Library's copy of The Annotated Alice, because not only is it plenty informative, it has the original illustrations, and it's pleasantly big- it brings back nostalgia of picture books. In late June, I walked to The Huntington one day. It was a sort of a hot day, but there was a nice breeze. Anyways, in the rose garden, I found a nice tall tree with a bench beneath it. Reading Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There under that tree was one of the most magical reading experiences I've ever had. I don't want to give anything away, but the setting was perfect. Especially with the beautiful ending, there I am, gazing into the sky pondering the last words. If reading it (in the summer, in The Huntington) doesn't inspire you, at least you'll have read a classic. Try it someday if you have time.

2009.32

As I have already enthused to my English class, I highly recommend this book to all young people. It really hit home for me and it's an exciting, engaging read that will leave you thinking.

2009.33

At first, this book was awful. At second, this book was horrible. But after a while, it started getting really good and really depressing. But still really good. If you need to read a WWI novel, go with this one.

2009.36

This book was delightful! You may have preconceptions that it's a creepy book about pedophiles and ew and blahblah, but it's really not. It's sad, it's beautiful and it's worth a read above all else.

2009.37

Aside from the fact that this book inspired the Beatnik generation, this book was.. hardly inspiring. Well, there are some noteworthy quotes in there that really

DO get you thinking about life and how to live it, but really what kept me going (as I read through pages and pages of driving, drinking, partying, lacking money, etc) was the amount of times Dean Moriarty says "YES!" in the book. I highlighted it every time. He would even sometimes go "Yes! Yes! Yes!" Variations being "EEEEEE!" Yeah. Weird stuff. Weird stuff.

2010.06

I loved this book so much. Okonkwo reminded me of my dad, so then I loved Okonkwo. The writing is beautiful and informative. It's also awesome because you hardly ever get to read books involving Africa (except for Heart of Darkness which kind of sucks.) I would recommend this book to anyone.

2010.17

I love existential crap, so of course I loved this book. It's FREAKING AWESOME! On a more serious note, this book is a great introduction to existentialism.

2010.20

A funny, happy, nyappy play with magic. What more could you ask for? The lines are beautiful and filled with intense moon imagery. "Swift as a shadow, short as any dream"....

2011.20

I regret reading this book. That is all.

2011.08

Equus is an amazing, heavy read. Kind of like Birdy, except for horses. I just really love reading plays, and this play really makes you think about what is right, religion and the meaning of life.

wayward girl, wanton fear

I want to be able to tell you so much. I close my eyes and I can hear the nighttime in the distance. Cars growling across the freeways. The late night trains, their mournful song.

My heart just beats faster and faster. My skin stings with goosebumps, I breathe out.. oh.. so.. slowly.

It might just come crashing down.

I see ghosts in the dark- their soft shapes. The last words I hear before I sleep. Goodnight, I love you. My bed is cold with vacancy. I want nothing more than for you to be here. Bob Marley knew what he was talking about- a single bed is good enough to share. I could wrap my arms around you and sob softly into your neck all night. Wet with tears, intermixing with your smell, your taste. I would hear your steady, calm breathes. Inhale, exhale. There's a reason why babies like being rocked and held. Steady rhythms. Like a heartbeat.

My long hair would tangle and meld with yours. Your eyelashes against my cheek when you blink. Our hands clasped perfectly together. With you, I think of the ocean. Endless. The moon reflected upon its calm surface. The gentle breeze. It's shimmering gently.

And with you, with you, with you, those interminable long nights would be content.



Alone in the dark, here I lie. I reach out sometimes, just for the hell of it. But I can never touch you, never reach you. Darkness just takes my lonely hand, attempting to make up for your absence.

But I close my fist- and nothing is there. Even in the moonlight, the beautiful blue wash- nothing is there. I could count all the stars in the sky, all of these twinkling beacons, but they mean nothing. They, along with the solitary streetlights, speak of loneliness.

If you listen carefully to the night, you can hear their soft weeping. We are so alone.

I want to tell you that I want you. I need you. I want you to want me. I want to give myself to you. But as the rapidity of my breaths come and go, I wonder. Is this real? I feel my heart bursting like a bud before a flower. I want this so much. But am I being precocious? Is this true? I want to say all of this to you with conviction- and I am, I truly am. I mean every word.

But what if conviction isn't good enough? The fear, the fear, the fear. My thoughts, my worry. I hate the howling wind.

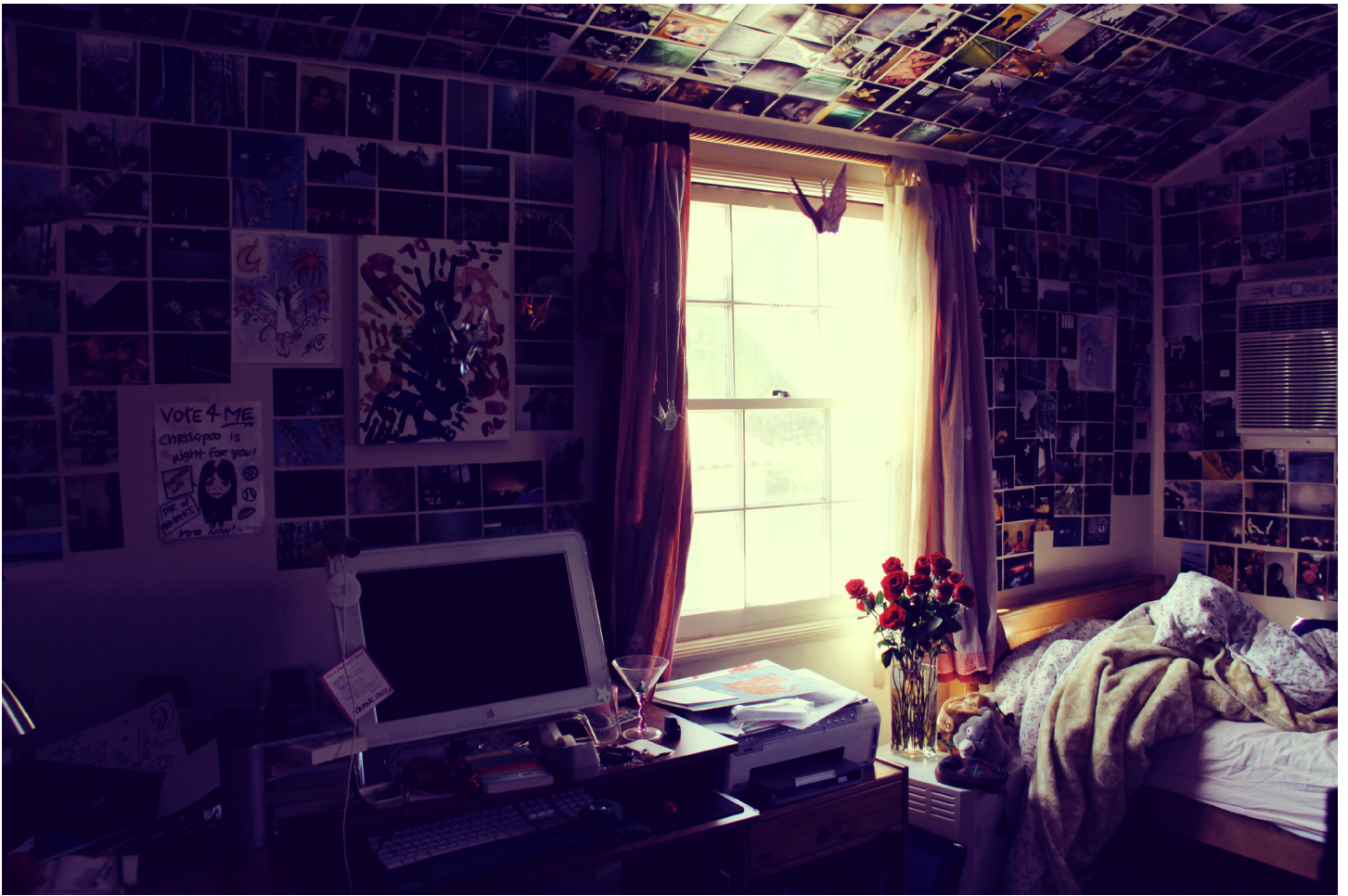
Oh these nights, oh this lonely. I just want to cry and be held by you forever. Night time is overpowering. The dark doubts and depths of my soul... Please take me now before it devours me. Please.



My Room

I change the layout/design every 3 months or so





hello, I am 'pissed.

are you ready for this?

hello, I had sex with your mother.

So now what? What are you gonna do? Are you going to judge me? Are you going to wince everytime you look at me? Have I somehow dropped in your eyes? Let me get this straight: it was completely consensual. I would never dream of raping your mother. She is a fine, lovely, upstanding woman. Wouldn't you hope I have sex with people I respect? Why does the fact that I exchanged bodily fluids with her mean anything to you? Why does it even matter? Does it have any relevance to you? No. Will I treat you differently because of what I did? No. I will still respect you, still be courteous and friendly as a bitch like me can be. So why can't I ask the same of you? I'm still me. Your mother is still your mother. And you are still you. So why are you the one who's changing from sex you did not have?

**hello, I am homosexual/bisexual/pansexual/
something-your-intolerant-brain-cannot-handle.**

What now, do you feel uncomfortable? Are you thinking, "Ugh, I bet she's checking me out." ? Yeah, well you should. Cuz every time I'm looking at you, I'm mentally taking off your clothes, one article at a time. In fact, every time I masturbate at home, I'm thinking of you. Not my boyfriend. Not my cousin. I'm thinking of you and your curves, your oh so beautiful eyes, your soft skin, your— *oh get the fuck over yourself.* You aren't that attractive. Nothing worth wasting my time to fantasize over. Why does the fact I'm also into girls make you automatically assume that I'm so horny fuck? Do -you- mentally undress every guy you see? Dear god I hope not. I wouldn't want you to go prematurely blind. *Same fucking thing bitches.* Just the way you respect any human's space, I respect yours. Even if I dream about banging the fuck out of you every night, guess what? I'll keep it to myself. I won't act on my desires. Why? Because I'm not a fucking *rapist* and I respect you and I can think about whatever I fucking want. It's my brain, my mind. It's free game in there. We don't live in fucking 1984. If my thoughts aren't allowed to be free, then what is?

hello, this is me.

I go to sleep at 1:00, 2:00, 3:00, 4:00 or sometimes 10:40. Some days I hardly sleep at all because I'm doing AP literature homework. Some days I hardly sleep because I'm talking with my boyfriend. Some days I hardly sleep because I'm having a heart-to-heart with my bestfriend. And some days, I hardly sleep because I fucking can. I dream every single night. Some nights I dream that my sister is in a concentration camp and I'll never see her again. Some nights I dream that I'm in love with a Nebraskan farm girl. Some nights I dream that my rabbit has turned into a human and is the perfect boyfriend. And some nights, I dream of the world, the sounds and the colours, the birds and the birdcalls, I dream of something far away and something so very sad. Something from the past that fills me with an eternal longing. When I wake up, my face is wet.

I wake up at 5:05, 5:35, 6:36, 6:46 or sometimes 7:17. I finish homework from yesterday that I did not do. I bring out my porcelain tea set and drink Earl Grey with scones while reading the newspaper. I take a shower and shave my legs using Old Spice bodywash. I eat melon popsicles, cake, pasta, pizza or tomatoes for breakfast. I have to try on every outfit the night before or else it takes me 15 minutes to decide what to wear. Yeah, so even if I'm wearing sweats, that took me 10 minutes to decide on. Some days I worry that my outfit will be "too weird". Some days I feel small and scared and pathetic and ugly and I wonder if I'm an idiot. If me simply being alive is a mistake— that every single decision I make is the wrong one and I'm destined for failure.

Some days I worry that my parents will divorce. I worry that I will never be good enough for my dad, that he will never love me. Some days I know I'm not good enough for him. I know that I'm a stain on my family's pristine existence. And it hurts. It hurts to grapple with my darkest fears every day, it hurts to have no one but your ghosts by your side.

I go to school, I don't if its a weekend. Sometimes I get really into the class, want my opinions to be heard, want to learn learn *learn*. Other times, I'm off somewhere else. Dreaming. Thinking of rainy days. Wondering if I'll even get into college. Wondering if I'll be happy when I grow up. That's what scares me the most. What if I'm not happy when I grow up? I love my friends. I love yearbook. But

some days it doesn't feel like enough. Like there's a hole in my life, that neither friendship, love, extra SAT prep or laughter can fix.

I come home at 3:24, 3:44, 4:00 or sometimes 9:16. I might pet my beautiful rabbit Rusty. I might eat strawberry Pocky. I might go swimming. I might read *Lolita*. Or I might succumb to horrible trashy teen novels. I might do my homework, I might not. I might worry about practicing for Kung Fu and dance. My mom might yell at me. I might cry. I might feel more lost than ever in my own house.

Those are the times I curl up and run into my dad's empty bed. I'll burrow myself deep into the covers, forget the world, forget the fact I have clinical depression, forget the lies, forget the truth, forget you. And my breathing will make under the covers very hot, but I won't resurface. I'm in my own place. It's dark, slippery cool like the nighttime. Silent. So dark that even the stars don't reach. And in my cocoon I fall asleep, drifting off into my dreams of something vague, beautifully blurry, slow moving shapes... until the darkness takes over.

So.

Did you know all that about me? No, you didn't. And do I know the same for you? No. I don't. Do you know what I'm thinking about when you look at me? I might be thinking of sex. Or my math homework. Or my dead grandfather. Or nothing at all.

So why would I judge you based off of nothing? I don't know shit about you. I don't see you when you hide from the world. I can't see behind your eyes. I can't look into your past, your present or future.

All I can do is treat you with respect. Be your friend. Work with you. Laugh at your jokes. Comfort you when you need it. Listen when you wanna talk.

Sure, I might hear about shit you've done. Or I might even know about it. But I don't know the whole story, and I don't need to, because it doesn't matter. I don't care about that shit. I care about *you*.

I won't judge. & I just ask the same in return.

sahdoas87!!fjsdfdis

Tear drops. Heart beats. Breathe in, breathe out.

I am submitting 48 pages of our book to the plant. These 48 pages will print exactly as I send them, these 48 pages will be in our yearbook.

Forever.

This is it.

Freshman year, I didn't even know what submitting pages meant. I had heard of it before, but submitting pages was included in the weird mass of responsibilities of "Management." They somehow made the class run, they somehow made everything happen. They held a strange magical power to make our yearbook come to life. It was kind of mystical, and I looked up at the tall, tall, Editors in Chief.

Sophomore year, I saw that it wasn't all fun and games. As I got further into the yearbook world, I saw that it wasn't just magic, it was real work. I saw Leadership frantically working to reach deadlines, I saw their furrows, I saw their frowns, but in the end, I didn't understand how "submitting pages," worked. It was some sort of vague goal the whole class worked towards, but something that yet again, the (less tall) Editors in Chief did.

Junior year I worked along side my Editors in Chief as equals. We stayed up till 1, 2, 3..4... am, but they always drove me home when it got too late. Even though I worked at the dining table with them to complete pages and proofs, I was never there till the very end. They would always let us leave after we finished our work because all that was left was... "submitting pages." It was okay, they said, they could do that themselves. And so yet again, I didn't know what submitting pages truly meant. Though I finally knew how to do it in theory (log in to yearbooks.biz ... click on eProofs... mark your pages..) I still didn't know. What was that final step that transformed the staff's beautiful work, their caffeinated nights, all of our love and tears into... our book? I didn't know, because my (short) Editor in Chief did that for me.

Senior year.

I am an Editor in Chief.

I could tell you what submitting pages entails: 1) Write down page numbers. 2) Package spreads into .zip documents. 3) Log into ePage, and go to eProofs and upload.

But that's not what submitting pages is.



This is real. This is it. This is me shaking, this is me tearing up, this is me hyperventilating. I am scared out of my mind. This is the real deal.

This is me pointlessly flipping through pages of our dummy book to stall for time. This is me randomly opening spreads in hopes to catch the final errors, but what errors will I find? Oh. There are two spaces after this word.

This is me, realizing that every little error (hey, you spelt my name wrong on page 184!) to every horrific, glaring one (why is there a red box that says “proofread copy” on this page...?) will be my fault. It’s my job to make sure that this book is absolutely perfect. And it is a job that I, along with every Editor-in-Chief in the world, will fail.

This is me realizing that every page I send today is a page that I believe should be in the book.

We have decided that this is print quality, this is what we want in the book, this is something that we want the rest of the world to know, this is something that we better be fucking proud of.

Prepared to defend it as our baby. Ready to love it dearly as our child. More critical of it than an Asian mother. Because these pages are our mirrors; we’re communicating

to generations to come that we believe these pages our worth reading, worth seeing...

That our work is worth the \$94,354.55 contract. That our work, our time, is worth something.

Thank you, Staff of 2008, 2009, 2010 for bringing me to this day. But most of all, I love you Staff of 2011.

This is our year. This is our book.

Prepare to have your mind blown. San Marino’s standards for a book will never be the same. Our book will be amazing. Because our book is beautiful. Because we have worked our asses off. Because your (shorter) Editor in Chief says so. Because all of those late nights, bacon-filled days and Starbucks have to add up to something.

This is it.

kjfkldsfjnjdlskfnjdslfmsdl;,fmds’fsd

fdsfdksfd,fmd

breathe in

breathe out

gfdgfgllfdslsfjdkfh s7rtwgpeofrwe

this is the real deal.

Breathe

Just moments before, she had felt small, innocent, vulnerable. Like a lone flower shivering in the wind. Trembling. A virgin on her wedding night.

Tracing every arc of his soft ears. Feeling every flutter of his eyelashes. Breathing in the same air he breathed. Cupping the muscular curves of his body.

Then she looked into his eyes. Cloudy. A faded gemstone in the sea. Eyes that couldn't see her, she leaned in and touched her nose to his.

Whiskers to skin. Human to rabbit. Animal to animal.

Animal to animal. She felt the whole world unfurl about her, the blood red petals furiously twisting into the blue sky.

It was as though something had awoken inside of her.

And she dove.

She threw herself into the ocean of the universe. She swam into its deep abysses, breathing in the cool, pulsating water.

Every time she took a breath, she was breathing with every past fish. Every plant she grasped, she touched the roots of long ago. Every flower, every fragrant fruit, every blade of grass,

It was within her. She was in the ocean, the ocean was in her. The knowledge of life, creation, and the inexpressible connection of its sweet nectar flowed inside of her.

She resurfaced. Glittering splashes intermingled with the endless blue sky. The horizon went on forever, but she was not alone.

She was with the earth. Its past. Right now. And forever.

Smile. Breathe deeply. She opened her eyes and dissolved. She became one with the sea.

Hidden

Goodnight. I miss you

No extra "t", a lack of an exclamation point, a sentence as soft and empty as slightly open mouth.

No period. There is no end to this lonely feeling. No lovely bow, no present for tomorrow. Instead a blunt, unfinished, trailing end that never really finishes nor begins.

My sentence floats into a heavy ache. The four simple words carry the burden of my shy, my vulnerable, my need, my weak, my cry, my

I miss you

Those tears that are never shed speak of the ocean. Of some place vast and wide and windless. A rippling body of water, silent, dark and heavy and black with night.

That is where my sentence floats on. Its reflection glows dimly, its paper thin strength sinking to the bottom of the sea.

All of the things unsaid, the actions unseen, the scars not made. I imagine a place sometimes, a white room that has no windows. A room with no doors and with endless space. My ocean is here, in the shape of pure white floors.

I stand in the center of this infinite space, the ruler of the largest and only kingdom. This is my home, my solace, my shelter and my hiding place. My hiding place from feelings of you. The monster that takes over my mind and robs me of simple thought, the monster which chained me to you, the monster that makes me cling like a child the monster that I cannot fight against the monster and the harsh rules, the monster that emphasizes the stress of merely being alive the monster the monster the fast paced breathing of a breakdown

I fall. I crumple in slow motion like a piece of paper. Fold inwards, cry out. Scratches upon scratches. Scars. Deep red blooms like watercolors on my skin. Ineffective gills open on my neck, parallel slices.

I fall. The floor cracks like a mirror, then bursts. Shards fly up slowly into the air, raining

down

down

down

into the water, the endless sea.

I am falling. And I sink.

Slowly. Drifting, sinking, farther farther down. Minutes... hours.

I cry out, I scream, I struggle wildly beneath the surface.

But what is sound in a silent room? And what is a voice from the bottom of the sea?

.
.
.

I look up. Underwater. Too far down to see the light. A few words escape my lips. Bubbles. I close my eyes.

.
.
.
.

Gentle ripples on the surface of the nighttime sea, in the endless room with white walls. There is no breeze. There is no sound. There are only four words.

Goodnight. I miss you



父's Guide to Marriage

I was talking to my father about the Big Bang Theory today and I pointed out to him that I wasn't aware that Caltech had a big.. dating scene (though the College Prowler notes otherwise). I always thought the students were too absorbed in their work and stuff. (ha, ha ha.) Anyways, we got on the subject of marriage¹.

GUIDELINE 1: Academics should never marry academics - "You will lead to the other's ruin."

PROBLEM: It is very very difficult to find a place where both parties can have a good job in a prestigious department/school- for example, Tuscon, Arizona has a big Astronomy scene but little Biochem scene. And obviously, since a person's career is everything, compromising for one another/sacrificing one's career is the only option if you choose to marry an academic.

SOLUTION: "Academics should marry secretaries." Or, "Someone who is not an academic but not a dimwit."

Carefully explain to your spouse that you will only marry them if they're willing to follow you to whatever institution's department is right for you. Secretaries are a perfect choice for a spouse because they should have no reason to object to moving to Juno, Alaska because they can be hired anywhere.

■ **GUIDELINE 2:** Marry people you know².

PROBLEM: You should only marry people that you are comfortable with.

SOLUTION: "Marriage is a big decision." Narrow down your choices - for example, "If you have 10 friends, start thinking about possibilities. Narrow down your choices to 5 possible marriage choices. Upgrade these friends to "intimate friends." From the 5, choose the most practical, appealing choice. "

GUIDELINE 3: Approach the idea of marriage like that of a business proposition- "When you buy a house, you ask all sorts of questions. Do not hesitate to ask these in the face of marriage."

PROBLEM: People often are disillusioned into believing that marriage is fueled by romance or feelings. They fail to realize that marriage should be approached logically and rationally.

SOLUTION: When you buy a house, you ask all sorts of questions to gauge whether it's right for you, e.g. price, neighborhood, noise pollution, neighbors, etc. Ask similar questions about your candidate (a pick from your "Top Marriageable 5", of course). Do they have enough money? If they are poor, are you rich? Or perhaps they are attractively wealthy. Does their career work for you? Do you want to have children? Are their parents tolerable? Etc, etc.³

BOTTOM LINE: "People are always sentimental and stupid about marriage. They do not see the systematic, practical areas that need to be considered about marriage. Make sure your choice is logically sound before proceeding."

"People seem to think that marriage is different from everything else in life, that it's not governed by reason. In fact, marriage is just like everything else in life. It is no different from buying a house. Consider all options and areas carefully to ensure a successful, viable marriage."

1. Interestingly enough, my mom noted that at the time of his marriage, my father was quite the sentimental mushy guy.

2. I really didn't know what to say to this advice, would you marry someone you didn't know? Or maybe I can just pull the race card on him here and note that as an Indian, he may be alluding to the possibility of arranged marriage.

3. I found this to be very sound advice. If something is truly strong and sound, it can withstand all sorts of basic questioning. Sentimentality has no place when questioning viability.

我賣水餃買我的
水餃隨叫隨到吃
我的水餃想睡覺
想睡覺吃水餃不
想睡覺就不吃睡
覺誰叫你不想睡
覺却吃水餃結果
吃水餃睡大覺

Chinese

I decided to take Chinese in my freshman year because all of my friends were Asian fobs and I felt left out. Thus, I took the language of their homeland. To my surprise, Chinese was reasonably easy to learn. Unlike Japanese, Chinese didn't have a million different ways to conjugate a word. In addition, the concept of tenses didn't exist in Chinese and there was no such thing as feminine or masculine sounds. Though most of my classmates found the tonal sounds difficult to reproduce, I had no difficulty. Reading was easy too. With some characters over-lapping from Japanese, it was a piece of cake for me to learn the pictorial language. Understanding spoken Chinese was a little different -- people had the tendency of speaking Chinese very fast. None the less, I took two years of Chinese at the high school and finished off at PCC during my junior year.

Favorite Chinese Phrases:

今天是我的生日！
祝我生日快樂！
為什麼！？
不要吃。
我要吃蘋果。

Favorite Chinese Words:

漢堡
鳥籠
風
我
蛋糕

Lines

My moistened lips part. My mouth naturally frowns. I gaze ahead, blankly, just as blank as the canvas. It's all a blur, the day, the sun, the silly laughter and memories. Empty. My painting represents me well.

Nothing.

But the cup overflows. Water splashes to the ground. I curl defensively, angrily, my hands to my face, my face to my knees. An unearthly cry, only fit for alien or beast. Only in great sadness can I paint.

Paint with slow strokes. Dab dab dabbing. White. Ice blue. Dark blue shadows, vertical lines dripping off the canvas.

That same line your finger traced from my navel. Eyes, hands, slowly leading downwards. *Shhh*.

That same line also from my eyes down my face. Your hand could have been there, could have felt the tears, could have traced my open mouth, could have held me and my ragged breathing tight. The shadowy room, the faint blurs of shifting light, and above all, the oppressive darkness. I don't want to breathe.

It's okay.

But not right now. Not here in my sadness. It is much too dark here. I am very much alone.

It's easy to forget how alone you are. But when the lights turn off and night comes in, it's the same story, every time.

Shadows from the thin crescent moon, the same lines. The same wet lines falling silently downwards on the cloudy window pane.

Streetlamps glow through the humidity. My poor vision, I inhale.

Sweat and tears, it's all the same. A handprint on my face. Five thin fingers encrusted with acrylic. Barefoot and bruised I stand before the canvas. My mirror.

Dark blue lines fall to the floor. Each drip echoes on newspaper, cutting through the thick, moist silence of my room.

An orchid buds painfully in a pot on my desk, too far from the jungle. Too far from the place where the rains fell everyday, with the sounds and the shapes and beautiful bird calls. It was not alone there.

But in this room, it is alone.

It is too dark and too heavy to cry out. Despite this, I pile on layers of blankets. Even with my eyes open, all I can see is black.

Drip, drip drip.

Lines. The orchid weeps silently.

It is alone, like me.

Both flowering painfully, far far from home.



Select AIM conversations

AIM, also known as AOL Instant Messenger has become the defining communication method of this generation. Why talk using your voice when you can giggle alone at your computer in a dark room? Sadly, AIM came to define my means of communication with friends throughout middle school and the beginning of high school. My mom would frequently ground me from it and I would have to sneak around her watchful eye to keep up with the latest weemo (wannabe emo) gossip and drama .

glossary of several faces:

o_o - suprised
O_O - really suprised
TT__TT - very tearful
T_T - crying
x_x - dead
^_^ - happy
._. - "...."
xD - laughing
XD - really laughing
8D - maniacally happy
:D - happy
:) - happy
:3 - nyappy

"AOL Instant Messenger (abbreviated AIM) is an instant messaging and presence computer program which uses the proprietary OSCAR instant messaging protocol and the TOC protocol to allow registered users to communicate in real time. It was released by AOL in May 1997. Stand-alone official AIM client software includes advertisements and is available for Microsoft Windows, Windows Mobile, Mac OS, Mac OS X, iPhone OS, Android OS, BlackBerry OS.[1] The software, maintained by AOL, Inc., has the largest share of the instant messaging market in North America, especially in the United States (with 52% of the total reported as of 2006).[2] This does not include other instant messaging software related to or developed by AOL, such as ICQ and iChat." - from Wikipedia

**screen names ("sn")s
that I have used:**
trblmakrmaya
maya da weerd

i like (with shadrahk220
also known as Justin Quan)

»):
» WHERE ARE YOUUUUUU
» oh well
» in the mean time before I go to bed
» ill talk about... trees
» actually, I don't like trees
» i like flowers!
» and I like hamsters
» and I like cherry soup
» and I like you!
» actually ive never had cherry soup
» it sounds good though
» i want a yellow hat.
» and a yellow umbrella
» when i was little
» i always dreamed of having a yellow raincoat
» and yellow boots
» but my mom never bought them for me):
» but i have a pikachu umbrella! now
» so thats good enough
» (:

palm fronds (with khaskuras also known as Randy Lee)

» so
 » ever since
 » i was little
 » and still now
 » like
 » when my parents (or anyone for that matter)
 » is driving
 » like
 » sometimes on the road
 » youll see like
 » branches
 » and crap
 » you know?
 » like on the road?
 » and i would always want them to
 » run it over (crunch!)
 » but
 » my parents would never oblige.
 » well
 » today
 » after pcc
 » im driving!
 » (with my mom)
 » and
 » i turn onto this street
 » and
 » theres this
 » HUGE PALM FROND
 » in the middle of the road!
 » so im like
 » YESSSSS
 » so
 » i run it over
 » (and it went CRUNCHCRUNCHCRUNCH)
 » BUT
 » while im
 » being really happy
 » i realize
 » THE PALM FROND
 » IS STUCK
 » because im like
 » whats that
 » dragging sound..?
 » and
 » i realize
 » im dragging

» the huge
 » palm frond
 » LOL
 » and my mom is like "SEE this is why you don't drive over stuff!"
 » and like
 » by this point
 » im laughing hysterically
 » and my mom
 » is really annoyed
 » and I'm like "I don't think I can drive right now."
 » and she's like
 » just drive home maya
 » and im like
 » LAUGHING SUPER HARD
 » and i drive
 » giggling hysterically
 » as the palm frond sputters behind me
 » and
 » obviously im home now
 » (the car is parked in the garage)
 » and its
 » still stuck.
 » and so.
 » I HAVE ONCE IN MY LIFE
 » driven over
 » that crap on the road.
 » and
 » once is enough.

**My boyfriend
of seventh
grade aka
Todd Liou
broke up with
me via AIM.
That *bitch*.**

xSiRmEePsALoT (10:32:01 p.m): You're a really cool person, Maya...
xSiRmEePsALoT (10:32:04 p.m): It's just...
xSiRmEePsALoT (10:32:07 p.m): -sigh-...
xSiRmEePsALoT (10:32:18 p.m): **⇒ You don't deserve me, is all.**
xSiRmEePsALoT (10:32:26 p.m): I mean
xSiRmEePsALoT (10:32:29 p.m): ****Im eant**
xSiRmEePsALoT (10:32:30 p.m): **=_=**
xSiRmEePsALoT (10:32:32 p.m): That came out wrong
xSiRmEePsALoT (10:32:34 p.m): I MEANT YOu
xSiRmEePsALoT (10:32:36 p.m): Deserved better
xSiRmEePsALoT (10:32:37 p.m): **>_>**

**AND SO ON MARCH 10,
2006, my first romance
of three months tragically
came to an end.
Immediately after this
AIM conversation, I went
outside and promptly
began to sob into the night
(it was also raining very
hard.)**

rain rain wash me clean

The rain is falling but I can't bring myself to think about anything worthwhile, much less write.

But I feel like I should be writing. I haven't really talked about what's going on, what's going on up here. In my head.

So I've been making progress as mature individual, sort of. Fixing things. Setting things straight. I deserve a pat on the back. I hated it in elementary school when teachers would "reward" you by saying 'give yourself a pat on the back'.

Why would that be rewarding?

Lately all I've been wanting to do is sleep. I'm so sleepy all the time, and not just because of lustful boys. My dreams have been so abysmal though... what's the point of sleeping when your dreams are so terrible that you keep on waking up from them (only to fall asleep back into it) ?

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. .
.

"I'm a good girl again."

Yes, I guess. I'll be good to you for a bit. You love me don't you? I know. Yes, I know.

But I didn't know. I didn't know that time when you looked into my eyes, you fell in love all over.

"Oh my god. I fucking love her so much."

That's sort of incredible, isn't it? For people to tell me all that. But it seems so strange... so strange that a feeling like that would be connected with me. "Love" and "Oh god she is so beautiful" those words don't even mean anything to me. I feel like they belong in a separate universe. I don't understand them. How could I understand?

I can't believe what I've been doing though. Like the time I lay next to him. He wondered aloud how I got boys to like me. I looked at the back of his neck.

And then I whispered slowly, almost sensuously into his ear as I lightly touched his shoulder, my mouth milimeters away from him:

"Just like this."

I could have fallen for you, you know? That day. That's what he said.



He said he could tell me anything. He said I really was adorable.

And then he would come into my room from then on. One day I was exhausted and I lay on my bed. He asked if I would move a little and let him lie down on it too.

And then I realized, I am not safe.

Why.

Why.

Why do people want my body? Not in a sexual sense, but why do they want to

just have me be there? "Even if you don't say anything."

Why does my presence matter? Shouldn't it matter what I'm saying? Why does the fact you're lying next to me on a bed do anything for you?

Why am I turning into everyone's little whore? I want to hold your hand I want to lie next to you I want to have you.

It's okay. You don't have to say anything. I won't assume anything.

It'll be okay. It'll be okay.

And thus my body has become valuable currency.

And I wake up from my terrible dreams. Terrible terrible terrible. Why should I go back to sleep?

Because when I'm awake, those dreams are real. Those dreams are real flesh and blood and Oh god I really don't have respect for myself do I?

At least those dreams at night, those are only dreams. Those can't hurt me.

writer

I sort of want to be a writer.

Let me rephrase, actually.

I don't want to be a writer, per say. I don't want that to be my career. But it'd be cool, you know? When I grow up, if I walk into Borders or something, there's this book. Called.. "Ethereal" or some other pretty word like that, by Maya Kulkarni. And it's just full of these graceful ramblings, social commentary and witty rhetoric. That'd be sweet, huh?

Anyways, that brought upon one problem – who would read my writing, anyways? It's not anything worth reading (this is normally the part where you would go OH NO MAYA, I THINK YOU'RE VERY INTERESTING or I'M SURE SOME PEOPLE OUT THERE WOULD READ YOUR STUFF, thanks but not today, I don't want that). But I wouldn't be content for my works to go unnoticed and unread, either. I want it to be in this trendy little paperback with clean white paper and a nice font like Helvetica (Light, probably). And these hipster kids and twentysomethings would carry it around when they go to little indie coffee shops, and share and lend the book amongst their friends. I would want it to be the sort of book where people hi-light passages (because they like the way it sounded), dog-ear their favourite pages, and put stickers in the margin. The sort of book that is quoted along with trippy, surreal photographs, or under some tense ink-drawing — "inspired by Maya Kulkarni's book, — —".

Why, though? Honestly, I think I have a lot to say. Nothing terribly important, and nothing terribly clever, but something to say. The kind of something that makes you think (because I can write 20 pages about the metaphorical use of curtains) or the kind of something that makes you realize the power of BS.

Basically, I just want to write what I want.

And have a few people read it.

Anyway, back to the real world. As many of you know (and I'm sure many of you felt the same way) school was really.. really heart-wrenchingly killer. Or something. And spring break would be some sort of a breather, where you could relax before realizing that in May all of AP Bio comes crashing down.

So I was feeling incredibly suffocated in San Marino, 24/7 on the verge of tears, because of school, because of missing people, because of me being a prat, etc, etc. And I thought when I flew away, 11 hours later, I could breathe easy again.

But here I am, in Japan, feeling ... pretty much the same. Except, I have jetlagg to, so I'm permanently "out of it". Which makes me realize, obviously San Marino is not the source of my problems. I thought they'd all go away the minute I went away. But there still here, bugging me more than ever. Which makes me realize that obviously the problem, if it can follow me all the way to Tokyo, is not within my environment at all.

I'm the problem.

Which is goddamn scary.

Because I'm looking up at huge cherry blossom tree (the flowers are in full bloom, mankai) and this incredible gust of wind comes along. The petals float in huge swirls, the wind carrying them far, far away.

Have you ever tried to catch a falling petal?

It's fucking impossible.

Obviously, you can pick them up when they're on the ground, but people have stepped on them and they turn brown and ugly.

Who the hell would want that?

silent

I remember the first time. The silence, the black air. It was January after all; anytime after 7:30 the sky looked the same as it did at midnight. Black. Cold. Still and unmoving, the stillness pierced by icy and distant unforgiving stars.

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. .

I carefully dressed, covering myself, goosebumps and all. Was his house really that cold the whole time? I stood and waited in the center of the small room. Wordlessly, he came back. The sound of clothing being put back on. Left sock. Right sock. He motioned for me and stood up. He walked downstairs. I followed him.

He then put his crumpled sheets into his washing machine. How did you wash something? How much soap was necessary?

I told him I didn't know. He gave me a pleading look. An arbitrary spoonful of detergent. A soft thud. *Shh*. He closed the lid.

"I feel thirsty." He gave me a small paper cup filled with water. As I drank, I glanced over to an orchid plant in his front hallway. It hung awkwardly, as if supported by the frigid air surrounding it. Yet it still had a beautiful quality to it. The fragility of its angles conveyed something deeply sad to me. I could not place it; I could not discern its rainforest colors well in the dark light. It just looked dark grey to me.

.
. .

Silence. He looked on straight ahead. Neither he or I smiled. I sat stiffly in the front seat. The normally comforting traffic lights of California Boulevard seemed indifferent to me. They were not on my side. They were like my father, detached.

He drove past the Astronomy building. I can't believe that just happened, he said to no one in particular.

I said nothing in response. I stared on ahead, allowing my eyes to focus and unfocus. Large globes of lights. White

spheres. Lines of red. Dripping. Red traffic lights. Red taillights. The red Astronomy building.

"I feel unemotional. Like I need to go and do something completely un-romantic, completely unrelated."

Like you need to get away?

"I feel dead inside."

What are you telling me, exactly? What do you intend for me to feel?

"I need to be alone for a little while."

A soft thud: me closing the car door. Walking down my street which lacks street lamps. Black. Cold. I shivered, moving briskly. I was wearing a short white cotton dress. It would have been almost bridal in appearance, save for the fact it looked much too child-like. Innocent. The kind of dress you wear when picking flowers.

Was it really supposed to be like this? Scared to call him, scared to interact with him, because he said he didn't need me, needed to be alone, needed space?

Scared to reach out. Scared to bother him while he was "clearing his head".

That night, I stared up at my dark ceiling. My room was quiet. He did not call me. I thought of the orchid. I thought of paper cups in the trash can. I thought of sheets. But most of all, I thought of the silence. My room was so very still.

Burrow deep into my blankets. I could still smell him. Still see the flatness in his eyes as he drove. Could still see the single lamp on his table, still feel his clumsy hands. Still feel his body that made me dead inside, made me wish it would be all over soon. His body that had been satisfied. He didn't need anything more.

I lay numb. On his bed. And now on mine.

It was only natural, right? We had just spent the last two hours very much together. It was only natural that he needed to clear his head, needed his space, needed to be alone, needed to be away from me. Right?

All of this, what he did, what I did, it was only natural. Right?



San Marino High

Love-Hate relationship

I love this school because it is clean, beautiful, filled with (mostly) motivated students and it brought me close to amazing school.

I hate this school because it lives and breathes its stereotype— most of the students are sheltered rich snobs. I hate this school because it made me (for a couple of years) think that my grades defined me and that anything less than an A minus meant I was failing.

I love this school because the kids here in general want to learn, no one throws crap at teachers and in general, we shy away from actually getting in trouble.

I hate this school because despite having everything, some students manage to fuck up their lives and party high school away.

I hate this school because it reminds me of how I could have done better.

But,

I love this school because in some moments it gave me school pride, because it made me love literature, it made me appreciate meals in the Toilet Bowl and Homecoming posters and it made me into who I am today.



The Day

I got rid of my stage fright

Mmm. The other day, after the kung fu performances, I think I've gotten over my fear of performing for good.

When I was little, I never had stage-fright. Not to say I was really confident, I just... didn't really care. The presence of eyes didn't faze me. And at the end, I would always give them a cheeky grin, like, "Well, wasn't that just a walk in the park."

But for some odd reason, I got scared again, like 3 years ago. Maybe it was after I sort of.. sucked in a tournament and didn't place. Maybe it was after I messed up on a lion dance job and Sifu yelled and screamed at me and I cried for hours.

And after that, the fear was...bad. I would dread performances, even if they were months ahead. I would be a nervous wreck before the show. Nervous DURING the show. Which made me hate them more.

But after not performing for a while, this Monday..

I was nervous as hell, as usual. But as I slowly made my way up to the stage and looked on at the crowd... something in my brain clicked. Deep breath.... Hey... it's that feeling again. I don't care that people are watching. Hell, who cares about them. I'm here to fly. Welcome back, old feeling. And so I did my form,

with a little extra showy flourishes. Tornado kick, land in a rear-bow stance, woosh and grab-punch. Pause, close. I see the crowd, hear the applause.

I grin. That old cheeky grin. I walk off the stage. Hey, *that was easy.*

Afterwards, there was some other performances and it was the end and we visited the stables (my kung fu teacher and his family have TWO HORSESSSS).

I realize, horses. Are. Goregeous. Godly. Seriously. I really want a horse now.

I was in this sort of fragile mood, you know? Like a baby who slowly got up from a nap. Blink slowly... soft mouth. Watery eyes.

And there the horses were. They let me pet them, rest my forehead against their long noses, and they have the most amazing eyes. One kept on licking my jacket, hahaha. I felt like I could talk to them, and they would just forgive me. They are so patient, you know? And their eyes. They look up at you carefully, kindly.

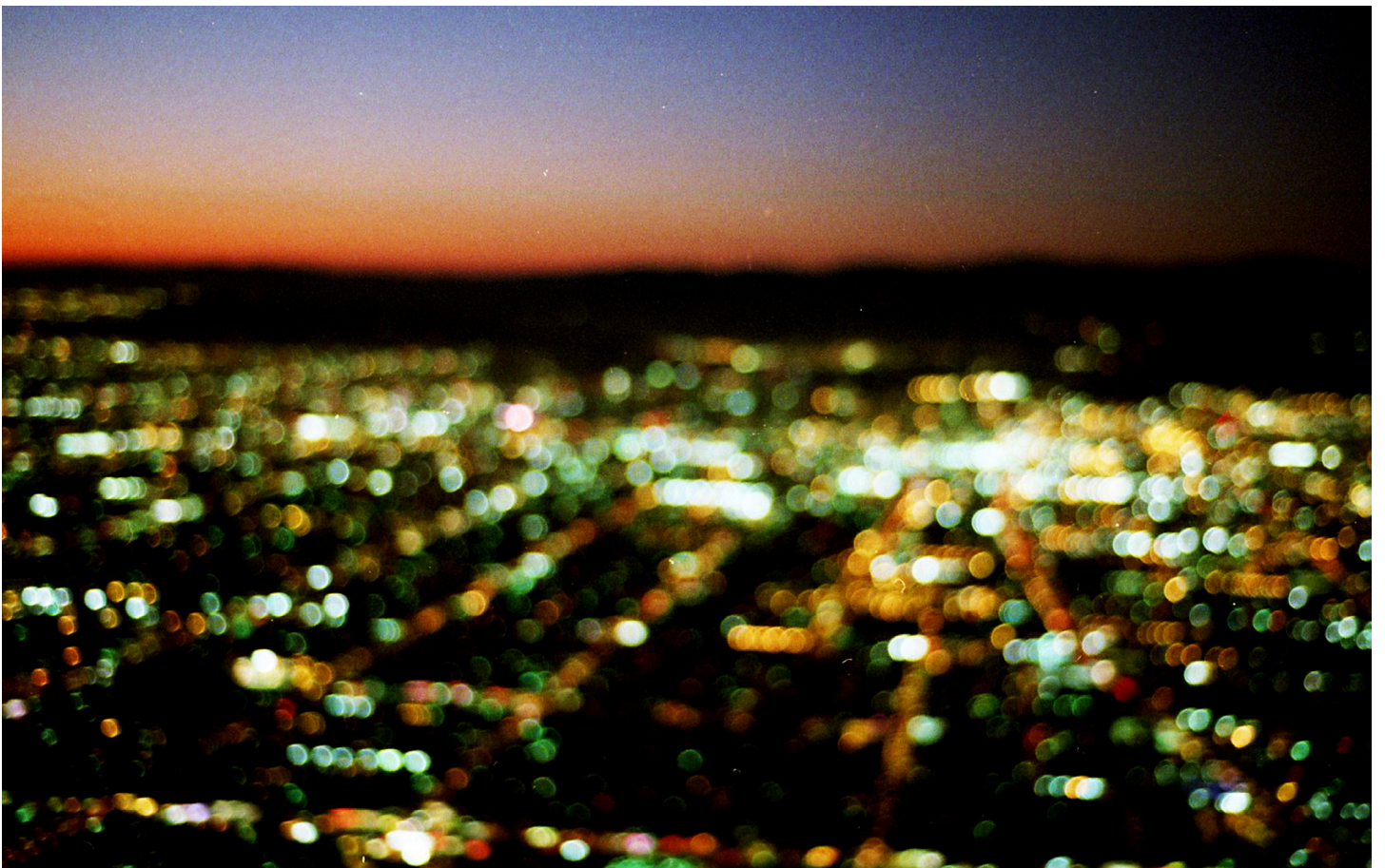
I don't know. It was pretty amazing.





Travel

At one point, I wanted to be a flight attendant









Food Presentation

Not too good at cooking or dishwashing, but I can set a table beautifully

I can't really cook food all that well. I also hate washing dishes. But one thing that is very important to me is food presentation. Even if I'm studying for APs at my dining table, I bring out my fine China. Even for breakfast, the strawberries ought to be arranged perfectly on my plate.







Michelle Chee

The Cnidarian whom I love

Randy Lee

The most inane boyfriend in the world.





Christina Lin

The Hester to my Pearl

Tiffany Lu

Vaguely supports my writing, also makes me question sexuality





Monica ML

best boyfriend in the world who cheats on me.



Todd Liou

first love and berkeley buddy



Rusty

I've had a pet rabbit since I was one

People think I'm joking when I say I love Rusty. They do not understand: I LOVE him. He is perfect in my eyes. My heartrate increases when I look at him. Sometimes I find it hard to breathe around him. He is just so beautiful, so much so the epitome of perfection. He is like Jesus Christ himself. His personality is perfect. His face is perfect. He is perfect. And adorable. And beautiful.



Loneliness

e.e. cummings got nothin' on me.

Right: i do this alot
 stare at the ground
 {vanishing point}

Below:
 silently







I want to be your gorgeous girl. The one that you think about at night when your hands are busy, the one you wish was caressing your back in the darkness, the one you want to hold and capture ...and the one you know you'll never have. Even though she throws herself around you like a vivacious ripe blossom, even though she giggles inches away from your mouth, she's a flower you wouldn't dare to pluck.

You might reach out sometimes in the moonlight, but she is just so. so.. so... far away.

You finally begin to fall asleep. And in the deepest areas of your mind before you fade, you hear a faint echo of her tinkling laugh. . .

You. Just. Can't. Forget. Her.

