

April 25, 2008

When someone describes a Christian rock CD as "seriously anointed," I kinda get a little furious inside, and I want to make them examine their phraseology. So they just throw these words around, and I'm pretty sure actual biblical anointing is more serious than a bitchin post-production on an album.

Also, I think about couples when I hang out with them because they go home and are together and I go home to livejournal. It doesn't suck. It's just at this particular moment, I wish things were different, but only for tonight, or this weekend, or for a limited time. I always want everything on my terms. But really I just want someone whose terms are almost exactly the same as mine.

I think we're all pretty isolated. Not in a self-indulgent depressive way. We're just alone more than we're together. It never seems like the exact right moment to fix it though, but I also think I've never had an exact right moment for anything, though I've had a few that I think come close. There was that church in the rain that one time, but I'm not sure if it was right. It was kinda poetic or cinematic though, and it was fun, and I liked feeling for an hour that I was living in a montage and my life was kicking ass and interesting enough to be written on a page by someone who cared about who would play the parts.

Sometimes I feel like we're forever typecast by God.

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Looks like my sweet gig with Victor Carranza was too good to be true. We had a meeting last Friday where we mostly discussed his forthcoming Monroe project. Despite his previous claims, I learned that his contract for this project was not quite settled. At the end of the meeting I brought up the architecture jewelry project and provided him with a packet of photocopied sketches representing the 40 hours of work we had agreed on. Victor seemed mildly interested in my designs and picked out a few pieces he liked. He alluded to future development of the project, but made it clear that the project was going to take a backseat to the Monroe work. When I asked him for payment he said he was unable to write me a check because he had yet to receive any money from the Monroe project. He then said he was getting paid Monday, and assured me that I would get my money on Tuesday, when I picked up the Monroe pictures. After leaving his office I became increasingly worried about my financial state. I called Victor back and pressured him for a check. He made no concessions. Instead he acted sympathetic and promised to call me on Monday with an update. That call never came and now I am feeling like I am getting ripped off. Victor had seemed mildly unconvinced at first when I said my drawings represented 40 hours of work. Now I am sensing that he is trying to back out of our contract. I wrote him an email yesterday politely demanding my pay. If he doesn't respond to my invoice then I will not be doing any more work for him. In addition, if he wants to get the architecture images I used, he will need to pay me for my design work thus far. He knows that I desperately need the money. If this job

does indeed fall through, then I will not only have lost \$1,200 worth of my time, but also two weeks of job searching. Now I am busy applying for gallery assistant and art handling jobs off of the postings on NYFA and Craigslist.

In other news, I am busy getting ready for my Visionary Crosswalks project at Pocket Utopia. Austin is sending out my press release while I am still working on a 4"x6" card. I still need to do the intersection/street maps and send out my promo stuff. After meeting with my planner friend I decided to add the map element as a way to potentially get feedback from pedestrians. I really enjoyed my discussion with Jen and we may collaborate for Conflux. In addition to the installations and maps I am doing a video night as part of Austin's "Social Saturdays" event series. I plan on screening various videos, including documentation of my work, potential work by Mary featuring my crosswalks as subject matter, and movie/internet clips dealing with crosswalks in some way. I am doing this in lieu of some sort of panel discussion in an attempt to cut out any unintended pretension or seriousness. I just basically want to have a fun get-together where we talk about the pedestrian experience in Bushwick.

I am getting more and more excited about going to MICA this fall. The US News and World Report just released their annual grad school rankings and MICA's overall MFA program came in 4th nationally(!), following Yale, RISD, and SAIC. I knew MICA was good, but I didn't realize it was 4th in the country! This means that including all the disciplines, MICA is better than Columbia, Hunter, and VCU – my other top picks. The rankings are apparently based off of surveys by all of the MFA deans in the country. I am now feeling a lot better about taking out \$50,000 in loans for this program. Plus I am going to have a shit load of fun making art in Baltimore and hanging out with Robby.

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It's over. He just came up to me while I was waiting in line for the bathroom at some kid's house party. I was so drunk I don't even remember what he said exactly. But he told me to get my stuff from his house, and then he walked away.

I think I started crying a little bit but then I pulled myself together. I dragged Chris into the bathroom with me... probably made a fool out of myself, I know I was blabbering about how I missed him, and then we made out for a minute until somebody got impatient and started banging on the door.

The hardest thing is sleeping alone again.

At least he didn't ruin any good songs for me. When guys play music while we're fucking, I associate it with them forever. And after we break up I usually can't stand to listen to it anymore, even if it used to be one of my favorite songs. Like Mark with the blower's daughter. David with Avril 14th. Philip with anthem for a seventeen year old girl. Brent with anything by the fucking

strokes.

I hated all his music to begin with.

April 25, 2008

7:30 am 6tbsp cornflakes, semi skimmed milk

1 pm 2 flat bread, 2 slices cooked turkey, 200ml smoothie

7 pm 4oz chicken in honey mustard sauce, cauliflower, carrots, peas, salad, 4 oz baked potato

Day 34 of 138

Doing okay, concerned about eating out, but found a pub that did home cooked rather than fried and/or with chips. Rang the surgeon's secretary, no cancellations so Aug 7th is still the date.

Went to silverlink with Michael to watch In Brugges, really good film. Loved Brendon Gleeson, but Colin Farrell and Ralph Fiennes excellent too. Michael fell asleep towards the end and had to fill him in on how we arrived at the end of the story.

Bob home when I got in. He was fine for a little while but then started hurling. Luckily it was mainly liquid, he obviously drank on an empty stomach. I held his head and kissed him and told him it was all right over and over. Love this man so very much, but I wish he didn't drink.

Gary is formally accused of bullying Dianne (by Dianne) meeting on Tuesday to discuss the accusations. My support with Gary obviously. Dianne unhinged and desperate for attention. A difference of opinion or an argument does not constitute bullying. I think the threat that she may piss in your drink if you upset her a little more of a problem.

April 25, 2008

Auspice marks the day, though it probably shouldn't. I'm realizing more and more that I seek significance in the mundane all too often—perhaps as a way of reifying that my life has meaning or that the decisions that I make are validated. It is getting harder and harder to figure out when something is actually meaningful or if I'm imposing or superimposing it—and then there is the eternal question as to whether these are the same thing? Do things have autonomous meaning? Maybe? Or is meaning only derived when meaning is shared beyond oneself?

Anyway, here's what happened: I had thought that I was completely done with my thesis last Monday, but after showing it to Uzi it was clear that a few things still needed to be sorted out. I worked it out, got an awful computer virus, and when I fixed it found I had lost a good deal of progress. Re-fixed the thesis, sent it back to Uzi and waited for approval. And yet this morning,

when I woke up, I knew it would be done, that I would get the go-ahead from Uzi, because—here's the thing—somehow I knew that it was exactly a year ago TODAY that my thesis fieldwork explicitly began. It wasn't that hard to figure out—it was basically signified through an email I received during the afternoon of April 25, 2007. So that was that. Uzi approved my thesis exactly one year after it began.

It wasn't like I had some divine revelation saying APRIL 25TH IS A MOMENTOUS DAY or anything. Basically, I had to look up that email sometime last week to cite it properly in my thesis, and it was probably tucked away somewhere in my brain that it happened on the 25th.

Q: Is this momentous/meaningful/auspicious/sacrosanct?

A: Probably not. I look for signifiers in everything. When the official tally for #of pages of my thesis came out as 103, even that felt significant because 103.1 was the radio station I used to listen to in WPB and my thesis is about radio so it seemed apt. But then it shrunk to 102 (thesis, not radio station). I realized the fallacy of my logic.

This is hardly the first time this has happened, and it's hardly the first time I've caught it and wondered if it was unhealthy. Example: In my first middle school my favorite class was taught in room 201. After a semester I had to switch schools despite how much I loved it. Then in CMMS (new school) I again had a class in a rm. 201, and I knew that it was a good omen for the class. And that was my favorite class, if only by comparison to how much everything else sucked. (I also lived in Pei 201 during my first yr of college). Anyway: the fact that I still remember rm 201 seems weird.

I undoubtedly get this at least a little from my grampa. The famous story involves him and my mom sitting in the car, about to drive to then-16-year-old-mom-before-she-was-mom's school. It was an awards ceremony for some kind of writing competition that my mom had placed in but wasn't sure which place. Another important part of this story is that my grampa's car (probably a buick, he only ever drove buicks) had funny windshield wipers—you could never tell if they would work on the first try or not. So: pre-me mom and grampa get into the car [buick]. My grampa says, "Donna, if the windshield wipers start on the first try, it means you won. Otherwise, I'm sorry, but you got 2nd or 3rd prize." Engine starts. Windshield wipers switch on. Nothing. Grampa says, "well, I'm sorry, but it looks like..." and then all of a sudden the windshield wipers come on in full force.

They get to awards ceremony. 1st place announced: not mom. But after a moment, woman whispers into announcer's ear, he says, "there's been a mistake, the winner is Donna McKible!"

So maybe what I'm really trying to do here is signify on my grampa. I miss him. He used to pick up a deck of playing cards and announce "Queen of Spades!" or "Two of Clubs!" and every now and then when he turned the top card over he'd get lucky.

Back to the 4/25 question: the weird thing is I don't even believe in cyclical time. Maybe it's like a

straight line, but in a continually upward curve so you can look back and see the bottom but never see the top or even where you're going next. The important thing, in the end, is that I finished my thesis. That today is 4/25, I think it best to think, is trivial.

April 25, 2008

I had to stay up late because of a surprise upon coming home from work at 10 pm. I have been attempting to breed ball pythons for the past several months. Initially I was very optimistic, but towards the end very pessimistic. I had been pairing up 3 different females with one male. 1 of the females was very fat to begin with. I could safely assume the others didn't become pregnant, but with this particular one I couldn't tell because of her girth. Well, just when I figured the chances of 1 out of 3 were too slim, I did a routine cage cleaning and when I opened hers, my heart skipped a beat to see 2 big eggs. Immediately I rushed to set up the incubator (which they must be in A.S.A.P). Before discovering this, I had been gone for 2 days, so they could have been laid any time since then.

The urgency I felt was unreal. But also, I was scared to make any mistakes. At 11.30, I felt that the incubator was at the right temperature and humidity to move the eggs. I removed the female (who was coiled around 5 more) and moved the eggs one at a time into the incubator. 2 of the eggs were dented, which means that they were not properly humid. I panicked and got a spray bottle of water and sprayed them. The water was room temperature, but even so it dropped the temperature in their container from 90 degrees to 80. This is about 9 degrees too cold, and if they stayed in those conditions they'd be stillborn. I turned the thermostat up very high to compensate. After only a few minutes the temperature was 99. I decided to slowly drop it instead of panicking again and making it too low. Over a period of about a half an hour, I brought it down to 89, where it should be. The eggs became undented almost instantaneously. Things evened out and stopped swinging back and forth so much.

At this point, there's no way to tell if they'll go full term but I can only hope so. 2 thoughts occurred to me during this ordeal that surprised me. One was simply how much concern I had for the well-being of a species that wasn't my own. There certainly was a monetary investment to this project that was at stake, but in that moment I wasn't thinking about that, only that I didn't want to be responsible for the non-birth of these snakes. I thought about how if these were spider eggs, most people would be happy to step on them. If these were turtle eggs, someone might coddle them only to make soup. And if these were copperhead rattlesnake eggs, someone would be chopping them up with a shovel right now. Sad that we only show empathy and care when the thing belongs to us.

The second major thought that occurred was even more troubling. I thought, 'if humans laid eggs, abortion would be like throwing these eggs in the trash'. Now, you don't have to point out to me all the problems with this. One, humans don't lay eggs, and the womb of a real person with rights is different than a machine plugged into an outlet. But the general concern for the propagation of

life was pretty foreign to me until that thought. Although I still keep a pro-choice outlook, it quickly wiped away my dark sense of humor about it and total disregard for those with the opposite view.

All in all, this was a humbling experience. I feel like a big pussy. If anyone could be emotionally detached from this experience, it would be me; and I'm not.

April 25, 2008

I just had a really bad dream. In my old house my dad had a den with two huge lazyboy chairs that he would go into and watch his gigantic collection of dvds and vhs. In the beginning of my life, they were my dad and mom's chairs. Then they became his and my chairs.

In my dream I knew my dad was dead but I was at my old house and I walked into the kitchen and opened the door to the den. Inside I had a giant blanket of mine and a bunch of pillows and there was nothing in my dad's chair. Apparently I had gone in there at some point and been with my dad but then it occurred to me in the dream that he was really dead and I could never go in there again and I could never watch movies with him. Then I left the room and looked around the kitchen for some food. After I made something, I opened the door slowly to take one last peek inside, and I saw him sitting there in the chair, but looking dead. So I turned around, rubbed my eyes, looked back inside and he was still there.

I took a nap at like 6 pm when I got home from work and that's what I woke up to.

What else that's bothering me is that all this week Drew was all excited about going to the beach, couldn't wait to go to the beach, blah blah blah. Even this morning before I went to work he was going to find out if his mom was going to the beach or not, and we decided that we were gonna go regardless cause I have enough money for gas. So he calls me at 3 pm (because I have yelled at him so much recently for not telling me where he's going while I'm at work because he doesn't have a cellphone so if he doesn't tell me, I don't feel like calling around to all of my friends trying to figure out where the hell he is) to tell me he's going to go listen to Ben Waldman jam with Segway. So I asked if he still wanted to go to the beach and he goes "uhhhh.... no. I just want male bonding time."

So I tried to find something to do but realized I was too tired to really care, and fell asleep around 6 pm. I wake up to no call from Drew, no texts, anything 9 hours after we've talked. And this bothers me because he should be sleeping with me and all I wanna do is get a hug and have someone tell me that it's okay.

That dream was the most fucked up one I've had in a long time, and I keep randomly crying for like 2-3 minutes then stopping. UGH.

April 25, 2008

It's 5:30 p.m. and I am listening to Jose Gonzales' Heartbeats on repeat because it is a comforting song and it is comforting to know what comes next. I am tired because my day started yesterday with the promise of sobriety broken, with all the alcohol that my body could not process from last night still coursing through my veins. I met LA and DK at the dive bar and then we press on for the house. They meet me there. I beat them biking it. We hang and DK tells me about growing up one girl with four boys in Philly. I get wasted and chain smoke and tell her that indesign is underused and underappreciated, and that I love LBB because LBB is funny and has two front teeth precisely half a pica longer than mine and because LBB finds me to be perfectly correct in a certain physical way that embarrasses me to be proud of, but man sometimes it is nice to be appreciated for things that are completely accidental and beyond your control, as though you had anything to do with them whatsoever.

So of course the first thing I do upon waking is email LBB back and try to act cool which just leads to the delivery of a stilted, crap email, but I hit send already: what's done is done. As better writers have already said, cross winds may exist. Or something. Walk home, stop for donuts, shower up, do the dishes, call DK call DK call DK (you will probably have to shake me, I really like to sleep in) call DK brag that I don't have work today to TS, make crit. mass plans (broken), bike to grocery store, help old lady find sauerkraut, smile about LBB, smile about LBB, buy groceries, sing sawdust & diamonds (1st verse only, and summat altered) all the way there and all the way back, obeying all traffic signals (mostly).

DK calls! Down yummy veggie brat quickquickquick. Meet at the train, but ohfuck I left the farecard at home and have my laptop and this sweaty little succulent and crap DK is doing me a favor and I can't make DK wait. Here is the friendship plant that was for another friend, that is now for you, but you knew that already, and the point is that it's yours now and even if you kill it, I have faith that this new friendship won't be dead. And anyway sometimes things just die. And I really just can't take care of it, and what's more, it's a wound torn open again. I just can't look at it anymore. BUT OH! it's so warm and nice. You have to go to work though. Boo. And then uninstall uninstall and must turn off the internet to save to disk and plans plans plans for swimmin' & shootin' & oh you're a doll, a delight, you're pure pepperoni in a good way.

Cool ranch doritos. Roosevelt. Check work mail. Fuck I am tired and LBB is brilliant and I've not picked any more fights today, and talked with MB for hours and MB will be here Monday. Crap I have a lot of work to do and shit to install. AS will visit by summer's end. I am tired I am so so tired and still drunk. Time for a nap and then back to the grind.

Sometimes I feel unappreciated by the person to whom I've given my heart. It's a hopeless, hollow feeling that makes me wince and bite my tongue in a feeble attempt to fend off the tears.

The depth is there—the love is there—but I miss the newness, the flutter of hope. And sometimes, it's not clear that what I miss should even be absent.

Does being together for such a long time mean that you no longer value what you have? Does dependability replace that subtle, starry-eyed lust?

Is it petty to crave a compliment or a brief suggestion of continued interest? Am I missing the point? Is the appreciation there, beneath the surface, merely waiting to be perceived? I wish that I could sense it...I wish I knew it existed.

And, there it is again, in the back of my brain, weighing on my conscience and my heavy, frightened heart...can two people be wrong for each other, even when they are truly in love?

April 25, 2008

Today I made myself wake up at 10 am in order to get my eight-page paper turned into my professor on time. I drank copious amounts of wine and vodka the night before and woke up with a miserable hangover, wearing only a pair of briefs and an ugly tie-dye shirt. I then put on some shorts and sunglasses and hobbled over to the building, climbing four stories of stairs to put my paper in my teacher's office. As soon as I managed to get all the way to the fourth floor I realized my paper had a typo, so I ran back to print out another copy. I could barely function and reeked of alcohol. After this paper escapade, I went back to my room and lied in bed for a few more hours. I eventually managed to go get some lunch and eat outside on the lawn with some friends. I had fried chicken, macaroni and cheese, beans, and a salad. Everything sat pretty well. Then one of our friends came and sat down by us. This boy and I are friends, but we bicker like none other. I have a big secret crush on him but nothing will ever come of it. After lunch I decided to head to the outdoor pool. I sat with three of my girl friends and lied out in the sun for a while, listening to some Enrique Iglesias and Bob Marley on my iPod. These girls are seriously beautiful and make me a little self-conscious about how I look and act. I know it's stupid. Eventually, I got into the pool, floated around in a tube, and then did some laps. Following the pool session, I journeyed back to my dorm room, took a shower, put on a more respectable outfit and went to a picnic for the International Studies department. I ate some delicious barbecue and talked to different professors and some weird IS majors. I felt awkward and really didn't know anyone. I did play a mad round of volleyball though. After the picnic, I went back to my room, still having a headache from my hangover, and watched the movie Atonement on my computer while doing laundry. The movie was so devastating and is still affecting me. I thought it was so crazy how a silly and insignificant letter led to the couple's extremely dismal future. So sad. I want to be in love. I thought about going out tonight, being Friday and all, but decided to take it easy instead. I went to this weird event on campus sponsored by the non-drinking advocacy group. I just ate a bunch of pizza and now feel extremely fat. I have finals next week and am thinking about watching Legally Blonde as a motivator. I'm so gay sometimes.

April 25, 2008

Part of me grows. Part of me stays the same. The bigger part, I think. I feel so much calmer tonight than I did last night. Maybe it is time, perspective, or just exhaustion. I wish I could extricate this constant and persistent thought of him. It is always present, no matter what. It isn't even really of him because it has been there much longer than he has. Since the beginning. The hims change and get replaced but thoughts just continue. What would my mind look like without them? This year has been a turning point for so many things. I just hope that I continue to push myself and try my hardest to resist the idea that nothing can really change. Patterns have not yet been broken but that doesn't mean they can't be. My roommate's dog is barking. I can't help but feel bad for it. I don't want to get so attached to it, but I can't help it. Maybe I just need to embrace my ability to love things and try to make it a positive thing.

April 25, 2008

It's unbearably hot and stagnant in my greenhouse of a room once again. Normally this would start my day off all wrong. Today, however, there is something harmlessly trivial about it, erring on the side of nostalgic even. I'm remembering sticky summer days in front of a fan... These days were filled with those cheesy, plastic, red-and-white checkered tablecloths held in place by baked beans, condiments, and various so-called salad dishes. Summer 'tis the season of swimming pools and chlorine, horse flies and mosquitoes. As much as I love the introspective depth that comes with winter, there is something to be said for the carefree slowness of summer. I'm actually looking forward to spending my summer in Florida this year. Perhaps I'll finally get a chance to know the landscape. My eyes and senses are open and ready--bring it on! There will be camping, sun basking/ appreciating, picnics, cook outs, and time to listen to the soft buzz of dusk as the world unwinds. I'm clearly excited to no end. In fact, I'm counting on summer to revive my sense of self (moving toward Self simultaneously), my sense of the present, and moreover, the sense of gratitude that comes with that notorious, ever-waiting feeling of interconnectedness. Yes, I'm coming to realize what an affinity I have for summer apart from the simple sense of seasonal contrast I once relied on. Now that my life has become more abstract (aka "adult"), the summer season has grown to represent and therefore, mean something quite different—namely freedom. Cheers to 3 months of that!

April 25, 2008

It has been almost two weeks since I've made my decision to be happy. It's been one of the best decisions of my life. I haven't been so happy in such a long time. I've been inclined to take care of myself, like eating healthier. (It helps that it's Passover, so no starchy stuff with yeast for me until Saturday evening.) My father was right. Happiness is a choice. It's made me realize that other emotions like sadness and anger are choices too. This revelation has been a spiritual awakening, one I've desperately needed. It's spread into every other aspect of my life and made them a little

brighter. I hope that I can inspire others to make that same choice for themselves.

For the past few days I've been brooding over the next step. This next step, I've concluded, is to elevate my confidence enough to speak my feelings. I mean, I've always been able to speak up about my feelings to whomever I had those feelings for. I know that I shouldn't let the past stop me, but my past experiences have not necessarily been so positive. Especially since I was the one who was always speaking up first, if at all. Does it drive them away when I say something? Am I too forward? I don't know. I do know that the risks I have taken in the "game" have proven failures. But I also know—there can be neither success nor failure without trying. Do I roll the dice again? That's a question I have to think about some more.

"She speaks in a tongue no one understands, but they don't understand because they don't listen." That phrase has been running around in my head. I wrote those lines as a start of some song lyrics. But somehow the lines are extremely relevant to me. My love of languages tends to annoy others, especially when I use them, but there are others who appreciate it in turn. Maybe I feel I am unheard? I don't really know. The feeling of understanding words that aren't necessarily your own is one of the most fulfilling, because it means you've achieved a new kind of understanding.

I just looked at the calendar and I realized something. School will be over in about a month and even though it will be nice to be home, I will miss it. I love being with all the friends I have made here and I love going to classes. There is still three years to go, but in the long run, it's not a lot of time. I'm enjoying it immensely and I'm enjoying it while I can. My friends—all of them—are the people I want to be friends with for the rest of my life. Even though I know it's not necessarily going to work out that way for all of them, I still cherish them as important elements in my life.

Well, tonight will be fun. We're going to make some pasta, proceed to consume it, possibly watch a movie or play with our lovely little deck of Apples to Apples, and then just hang out. (This is what I love about college!) Then I have to drive early tomorrow morning back home so that I can go to a Bon Jovi concert tomorrow night. (I've had tickets to this for months, I'm so excited!) Unfortunately I'll be missing our Saturday night movie night for the second time in a row, but hey, you win some, you lose some.

Cheers!

April 25, 2008

Today was a great day—more great than usual. As soon as I walked into work this morning, my boss' boss came to ask me to do something for him. I agreed (as opposed to normally chatting on facebook), so I worked all morning long. Then I went out to lunch at Jake's—I was amazed that the guy at Jake's knew what I wanted. I guess maybe he knew that I was a vegetarian since I had been in there before. Awesome. Then I went back to the office and ate my delicious pizza. After, I

went to Joe's office for a conference call. Boring. Cecilia and I were there and clearly we were bored out of our minds. Just other mindless drivel about our jobs.

Then I left work (yay) and went shopping—no success. I got on the train and went to Chestnut Hill. Then we went to dinner, got drunk and then wrote this journal entry. If I was sober, this would be so much better.

April 25, 2008

1:34 pm I slept in today for the first time in ages. It's difficult to know how long that is... I have no sense of time anymore. Got up, got some lunch/breakfast... it's so beautiful outside. I love spring in the south... I'm gonna have to move outside soon because I feel like a waste of a person being inside all day, doing work. We aren't meant to be indoors. If nothing else, that is something that I firmly believe. I haven't talked to boyfriend yet today... In a way, I kind of like it when he goes away. I can spend a night in, to myself, and I don't have to worry about that whole balancing time between friends and boyfriend either. I think it will be good, in a lot of ways, that in a few weeks he won't be on campus anymore. I think having school and boyfriend separate is good. And I think seeing each other a little bit less is good, because then we'll actually want to spend good time together. We could have the rest of our lives to spend together, and in the meantime what I need to focus on is finishing out this semester. I'm still hungry. I think I might go grab some pop tarts.

11:31 pm Close your eyes and I'll kiss you, tomorrow I'll miss you, remember I'll always be true...

I miss him. I'm not gonna lie. Silly, I know... it's been what? Two days? We've been apart for over a month and that was not at all easy. That was pain, though. This is just more... I wish he was here next to me to cuddle up with, because I'm about to go to bed. I feel kind of lonely.

Sometimes I forget that everything really will be alright. Not easy, but alright in the end. He does love me. And I do know that. I need to trust more and he needs to grow up some. God. Oh how I wish he would grow up sometimes.

Is it bad to feel like I need to be less needy? Less obvious? Should I be playing hard-to-get after we've been together for eight months? I suppose I was extremely hard-to-get back in the beginning, but that wasn't intentional. That was because I wasn't even fully interested. Now we're in a relationship, we're in love, and to be completely honest, I am really in NO WAY aloof. I don't open up easily because I'm shy, but underneath that I'm messy and emotional. Sometimes I'm afraid that he won't be able to handle my craziness anymore and might just give up on me altogether. I think one of my biggest fears in life is that I'll never find a boyfriend or spouse who can be as close to me and make me as happy as my best friend does. Maybe it's meant to be that way.

April 25, 2008

2:18 am "You sit there in your heartache, waiting on some beautiful boy to, save you from your old ways..."

SAVE YOURSELF DAMMIT! AND NOW! STOP STICKING IN THE SAME MUD AND MOVE THE FUCK ON! SAVE YOURSELF! RIGHT NOW!!!

6:42 pm So, I am a little calmer now. I still feel that a few days apart is really good for us now and then. At least for me. I call it "the detox." I feel calmer after awhile. Relaxed. It's rough for a day or two but then its great and I almost want to stay away so that things keep making sense. But then I remember how good things can be after a break, or you call me, and I want to hang out if for no other reason than to feel that way again. Then a few weeks or a couple of months goes by and the cycle starts all over again. You are both the best and worst thing for me. We go together perfectly and yet not at all. I cherish our friendship. Ours is a very strange and unique one. Our hours at the diner, our video games. The sex, the foreplay, the cuddling. The want to see each other so often. Why is that, I wonder? I don't hope that our friendship will never change but I do hope that it will always be strong and strange and meaningful. I want to always be special to you and I want you to be special to me, no matter who we are with or married to or whatever. I wish we could promise this to each other, but we are too much of "we don't know what's going to happen" kind of people.

April 25, 2008

My life is unapologetically confused and twisted with obsessive thoughts re: the false boyfriend I've been pretending to have, pathetic work concerns, and family obligations. I miss other people. I'm without the things I could have done or been, and am with the ebb and flow of an unchartered life. I am so with that. I have broken up with the attorney, which was a foolish relationship to begin with, so I know I deserve the abysmal state I'm in. I've become very clever at ignoring signs, gut reactions, and tricking myself into thinking people are something they aren't. Am great at it! Well, at least I was finally honest (very drunk) with him, we should be able to be friends at some point... Am very very sad I won't be having sex any time soon. Extremely upsetting. Have realized I can't have just casual unattached sexual relationship because sooner or later someone's going to think their falling in love with the other one, very unhealthy way to live. I wonder if having sex one last time will be a very bad idea? Probably not wise... Well, maybe will have a chance to get back to things I really love and have let suffer because of my selfishness. Oh god, will miss him so much. I'll keep you posted re: disintegrating.

April 25, 2008

This morning I woke up late, but it didn't matter because there are no "adults" in the office. As soon as I realized that, Dann and I went to get breakfast at McDonalds. Man, I love a McDonalds

biscuit...probably because it seems so sinful and because I get to feel their buttery awesomeness on my tongue so rarely. Yum. I've finally learned that I can't order the whole meal, since I never eat the hash browns. Also, since I'm cheap and I knew there would be coffee at work.

And there was coffee! I was kind of looking forward today, since there were only 3 of us in the office. My goal was to take a shot at cleaning off my desk. Or surf the internet. When I got there, though, I didn't feel like working, and the McDonald's sausage biscuit kept me full until 1.30, which was bizarre. My officemate didn't come in until 11 because he overslept. This did not help my mood.

I finally got up the momentum to clean out my inbox and respond to several overdue (and/or forgotten) messages, clean the piles of paper out of my office, and read those things I had meant to read 2 months ago. A slow day is nice, but now I realize that I'm glad I don't have them often. They are... too slow.

Shannon came into town tonight. She usually works on a cruise ship, so she always has interesting stories, and she also always has not very much luggage. We went to dinner at Sangria and I had a very bad mojito (not enough simple syrup) and a over-spinached quesadilla (I realize it was a spinach quesadilla, but really. I just wanted more cheese).

Then off to Smokin' Joe's with her, Dann and another couple, where we had too much beer and talked loudly about how ridiculous it is that HPV is kept secret when it is so common. We railed on about that until the boyfriends had learned enough and it was on to other things, but apparently the conversation after that wasn't rousing enough for me to remember now. Add in a semi-stumbling walk home and a refusal to let Dann drive to Taco Bell, and there you have the day and night.

All in all, it was a good preamble to the weekend.

April 25, 2008

Mr. D and I have been in serious negotiations over the last few days about how we should be spending our time. These negotiations have been heated, turning Cuban missile crisis-esque quite quickly. JFK is played by Mr. D, yo soy Castro and the USSR is this nebulous mix of drinking, partying, staying out late, sleeping in late, not eating properly, working out sporadically and generally being lazy. Castro and the USSR are likethis and JFK ain't havin' it. Mr. D hasn't issued any key policy changes YET but he has ordered increased surveillance of the situation to assess any potential damage the USSR has or could cause(d) to his homeland. Castro is pretty indifferent and self serving and hesitant to give up her borracha ways. Ways that either have her stuck motionless or in a perpetual state of motion. She's not sure which...

April 25, 2008

There is so much happening. Our wedding party is next weekend, so we've got all these plans to finalize. El will have to order food tomorrow while I'm at Jodi's Bridal Shower. I almost can't even wrap my head around it anymore. Not just that we're married after 10 years but just all the bullshit of these things...and we're just having a park picnic with 60 some people. I could never have one of those ridiculous princess faerie tale affairs. Wouldn't happen.

Things with the comic book are working out well. He digs my writing, which is great. It's script writing, which is what I wanted (albeit not film related just yet)...and it's a paying job. Getting started with a writing career has been like working a 14-hour day and maybe getting paid for 4 of those hours. I am worried that El is going to break and demand I get a "real job" soon.

Dad got the job in Wisconsin. He'll be moving out there next month. I'm curious how mom will handle the news. I really don't think she was expecting him to move so far away. Of course, I still really think she expected him to beg her to stay. Whatever...not my relationship and dad seems SO much happier than I've seen him in decades. DECADES. Pool stands at:

Barbara: 2 weeks out

Me: 2 Months (Out on June 1st)

Elliot: 6 months

April 25, 2008

Six smart sharks swimming slowly- worst conversation ever yesterday- first delayed by beating, all I needed was a yes or no- call home very good- need to live close to my family Chicago #1 choice- AHHA application needs to be done today- ankle still being uncooperatable- still disregarding spelling rules- book is coming along- still enjoying the process which is good/the only way to write a bit worried about the pace- stab wound from host brother-jerk- why does ankle hurt the only month when I really really need it- there are only so many pear 5k's and barefoot marathons- maybe spilled the beans about D being sick- should warn him- trying to stay afloat and not drown in the lesson plan flood- work grad school hard to figure out- hopefully it works out- I just need to a free ride to a great school- fighting!- gre- Not looking forward to day trip- maybe soccer on Sunday, if I can't play I can at least be a rowdy fan- embassy sent out a warning about seeing the torch- hmm- school inspector does not make me happy- unpleasant burberry incident eww, right on main street- disregard embassy warnings? Eight hours on a bus? Probably- there is a creepy guy trying to read over my shoulder- I don't even think he can even read English- hey creepy man, can you read this? You're creepy

April 25, 2008

I'm thinking of quitting my job. Yes, again. This is the eighth or so position that I have held in the past four years. I was on the incline for a while, but now I'm definitely on the decline. I can't teach kids. Especially now that I have a new pet that needs food. This salary is just not good enough. I need something substantial—something kind of full time. I'm 24 years old, and I have crawled back into my shell after three years of complete financial independence. What is wrong with me?

I need to lose weight, for sure. Maybe that's part of the problem. How am I supposed to get myself hyped up and ready to go when I'm thirty pounds heavier? I wish my boobs would melt away first. Men expect you to be cute when you have them—not smart. Maybe that's my problem. I have encountered too many people who get a fixed idea of who I am by my appearance. That makes sense—especially now that I am a complete recluse. Stop looking at me like that, creep-ball—I quit and will threaten you by hiding out in my room with large chunks of brie cheese.

Well, maybe it's not completely like that. I spend a lot of time on the phone. I also saw an old friend last week. We got lunch, drinks, and coffee. I liked the drinks better than the rest of it. I forgot how much I like drinks. I think I should be sedated from now on to make me dumb enough to tolerate the men that I end up working for. I remember this girl from college who was thirty something who would carry around a flask everywhere she went. I don't think I could go so far... but maybe someday, when I realize all my dreams have been derailed by people preventing me from achieving them in a deliberate attempt to be as douche-baggy as possible... It could happen. This isn't a future foretold or anything. I just know my reality more than you do, Boss. Don't try to tell me it's like this when everything in my being says it's like that. Do you have my eyes? Are you in my skin? Do you have a pair of my shoes on? No. I do. Notice that I said "I." When I say something, listen carefully. I'm not trying to hypnotize you with my voice in order to make you look at my chest. My mouth does not open up and spew magically cute things all of the time either. No, I'm not a lesbian because my brow is contorted rather seriously. There are times when the world doesn't revolve around you-YOU-you. Go star in a porno! I intend to keep my blouse and my mind on.

April 25, 2008

I haven't been able to sleep since I found out one of my closest friends may have raped someone. I thought I trusted and loved him. Now, I'm hearing that he raped his ex-girlfriend and caused her so much pain she had to be hospitalized. I need to talk with him but I don't know how. I'm afraid of the confrontation but I'm more afraid of silence.

April 25, 2008

I didn't want to sleep in my own bed, or really be in my room, but by 2 or 3 this morning that is where I forced myself to fall asleep. Had dreams about being in love with that kid at school who I can barely stand and being held hostage in a really deep and narrow sand hole on the beach. Now I am just listening to music and waiting for class. Damn I am gonna be late again.

I hate when I talk too much in class because it ends up making me feel smarter than I am.

Saw M today and forgot that I shouldn't get excited (but I wouldn't mind if he would show up around my room, I am sure we could think up some way to entertain ourselves). It drives me nuts that everyone knows M. He's such an awesome kinda guy, and damn sexy too. I hate sharing, not that it is really applicable in this case, since sharing implies some kind of ownership. Someone talking on a cell phone today said that New College would be a great place to live if you were a lawn mower.

Went home with L, it's her sis' bday tomorrow. We had a fun car ride, I love hearing people laugh, it is such a great noise. Dinner with her family was pleasant, talked a little politics, but nothing serious. I forgot to thank them for dinner because we were in such a rush to leave. I almost wanted them to notice us playing footsies under the table. I wonder if I should talk to M about this. I don't necessarily feel like I have to, but it does bother my conscience to think I may be hurting him (all from a little game).

We saw a strange clown musical that L's friends were in. It reminded me of my high school days in a nice sorta way—a real rarity. It was nice to have such a chill sorta day, and I am glad to get away from school, there is too much stress in that place. Ahh! Me and L are gonna crash on her bed with a movie (and yes we are going to watch it, don't even go there). Gotta go!

April 25, 2008

I woke up incredibly tired Friday morning. I was averaging a little over 5 hours sleep a night this week. I also didn't eat on Thursday, as part of a voluntary fast to smooth over my divine relations with Apollo. (We make good adversaries, but I have more important people to contend with.) Wasn't very hungry in the morning, so just planned on waiting until lunch (11 am). Woke up at 7 as normal, showered, and walked to work. Checked my email and other online addictions. Took my morning break and walked down to the bay as usual. It was a wonderfully windy day. Came back and killed a few minutes before heading off for lunch at the cafeteria. My Love had brought us lunch, and we ate it while she tried to sell the last t-shirts from Fetish Ball. We were both tired silly, so we sat about making very little sense, and amusing the student body in general. I got a brief glimpse of my heart's current pursuit, and pointed her out to my Love, as Love had thought she had seen her earlier. Love had been incorrect. Returned to work, and pulled myself through the day, typing manically or not tracking well, and staring blankly. Grabbed a Bawls on my way

home, to give me the energy to play soccer. Went home, changed for soccer, and went to the field. Got there early and warmed up with the other early birds. Got hyped up for my first "real" soccer game. We played relatively well, and tied 5-5, one of which was a point I scored (made me proud). After soccer I had intended on going to a pool party, but instead passed out for a couple of hours. Woke up around 10 and went over to check on the new role-playing group I am joining. Cased them real quickly, but was too tired to really interact with anyone. Got the itch to walk around, so I did. I checked in on Love, but she was cramming last minute homework, and couldn't be sociable. Hung out waiting for the Sexiest Man competition to start. Once it got going, I went down to the bay again to grab Jacaranda and roses to place on my Heart's pursuit's balcony, while she was busy watching sexy men. Got distracted, and read a friends fantasy-psychedelic-shaman quest story. Gave her a thorough critique of it, and returned to the Man Contest to watch my friends compete and listen to the lusty ladies. It was fun. After it was done, I got to send Heart's Pursuit to bed, with a moment of weighted pause. I then went looking for chalk, to tell her to look for the flowers. Found it, left the note, and went home, where Love had just finished her homework. We crashed.

April 25, 2008

I almost got hit by a car on my way home from the light rail station. I wasn't even jaywalking this time. The light was green and the Walk sign was lit, and a stream of cars making left turns came barreling in my direction. I got out of the way of a small red car before nearly being hit by a large, silver SUV. I yelled, 'HEY!' and waved my arms and ran to avoid a collision. If I hadn't run, I would have gotten hit. It shook me up a little. I don't even know if the driver saw or heard me. It's times like these when I wish I carried an air horn with me, strictly for using during pedestrian violations. I'd use it to avoid getting hit by a car, and I'd use it to enforce the right of way that we pedestrians have. I would likely use it every time I walk past the Shabelle grocery store near my house, because no one who exits that place understands or cares that the exit to the street is also a sidewalk, which is something that people walk on, people who don't appreciate having to always walk around cars. Sidewalks are for people, not cars. I'd use it on the drivers of those cars. They would get it eventually, at least I dearly hope so, or else their hearing would slowly deteriorate.

Besides an air horn, I also have visions of walking on top of the front bumpers of cars who are sitting in the crosswalk, instead of simply walking around them. It would be a real literalist, stickler thing to do. 'Well, this is the crosswalk, and I'm a pedestrian, so here I go walking through, over, and above this crosswalk! It's unusually hilly today!' I can imagine that half the time I'd get the drivers to honk their horns, and the other half would probably be in too much of a daze or in too great a state of shock to notice. And then there'd be one person out of a hundred who would laugh. Those are my people. Unfortunately I don't have nearly strong enough thighs to walk on top of the front ends of cars, nor do I have large enough balls. Instead, I get out of the way of idiot drivers, and I walk around cars, and I bitch about it to myself and think of scenarios like

these in order to entertain myself.

J played *Midnite Vultures* by Beck at work today, and when the song *Mixed Bizness* came on, I prepared to become uncomfortable. I've had that album nearly since it came out, and in that entire time, the line 'Freaks flock together and make all the lesbians scream,' has always made me 'shift uneasily,' as many fiction books say. It always makes me feel awkward, and it always has, and only in the past four years have I had any inkling that I might not be entirely straight, much less anti-straight. Something about the word 'lesbian' really throws me for an uneasy loop. I'm working on it in therapy, though. J knows I have a girlfriend, so I expected him to say something about that when that particular lyric was sung, but he didn't, because he's a better person than I think he is; because he's professional sometimes, when he needs to be, when he wants to be. He pleasantly surprises me more often than not. I haven't told M that I have a girlfriend yet, probably because it hasn't come up naturally in conversation; he's my favorite co-worker though, which is what's interesting about it. I'd think that he would have been the first person I told, well, second to Juice, but I haven't told M yet, and I've been working there for over six months. I'll just have to see if it ever comes up and if I feel like mentioning it.

I wonder if I'll ever find a girlfriend who I am sure that I am in love with, or a girlfriend that I will be almost totally satisfied with. I know it's unrealistic to expect to be completely satisfied with someone. Everyone has her faults; I wonder if I'll find a girl whose faults don't greatly outweigh her assets. I wonder if maybe my thinking or my point of view is faulty. She didn't know that I have always wanted to be a writer, after two years together, and that really surprised me. So whose fault is that? Hers for not remembering, or mine for not mentioning it (enough)? I mean, that's a pretty important detail about myself, I'd say. I know I have a tendency to keep at least some defense up at all times, but that's because I have good reasons for doing so. It's protection. So why don't I feel safe yet?

April 25, 2008

The kapok madness continues. All those pod panels I gathered up on Wednesday? They have coalesced into nifty things. Like a pendant with very scrolly designs woodburned into it. I've two necklaces done now, but only one with kapok. Acorns were later thrown into the mix. I posted pictures in my gallery.

As for the poem inscribed on kapok pods, I still can't seem to photograph it in the right light. I'm going to try it on another day...it was a bit overcast this evening. I want to get it near sunset, when the light is all drippy gold. The lighting was right the night before, but I couldn't get the image sharp and clear enough. I want this to be perfect.

I'm kind of scared. Of being trapped in this little town. What with rising gas prices and a looming halt on my ability to travel, I worry that I'm going to be cut off from the people that I love who live in San Francisco, Tampa, New York. I'm having trouble finding a job here. There is simply

more work in cities. I won't be a terrified little mouse. But I will be a troubled manticore. It's been at the corner of my mind for a while now, but it blossomed into full-on gloominess today. It wasn't helped by the other things that happened.

The people who threw the job fair I attended last week sent me a form letter which arrived today. They told me they don't want me. I am amused and a little sad, though I'd really rather not be in a commission-based sales environment.

And I mailed off the knife today. Finally finished it earlier this week, I am very pleased with the way it came out. B and I both worked on it. 5160 steel from a lawnmower blade, stacked leather handle dyed black, based on the Fairbairn-Sykes design. Brass pommel that we made and cast ourselves. This should have been a more triumphant moment than it was, seeing as this was the first commissioned knife I'd done. But...I brought it to the pack and ship store, and the woman at the counter asked me the contents of the box, as she needed to. I answered, "A handmade knife." There was a guy who had come up behind me in line. When I was finished and turned to go, he said to the pack and ship worker, "I wouldn't buy a knife made by a girl." That moment is hard to match in terms shame, discouragement and hurt—a slap in the face. I went home and I cried. I think this is the only time I've ever felt justified in crying (only girls cry, they tell me—tears sizzle when they hit hot metal).

Everything else today seemed kind of dull and faraway after that—a little like a laundry list. I repainted the numbers on my green D&D dice, because the original paint had worn off. Went to retrieve a boot disk for my OS (my computer remains stubbornly dead—damned corruption of necessary files—but here's to multiple machines in the house). Read some. Wrote some. Wondered if that guy's sentiments hold true for more than just him, if other people wouldn't buy knives from me because I happened to have been born with two X chromosomes...all the while thinking to myself with kind of listless sarcasm, "After all, I'm just a girl. Girls apparently don't forge acceptable knives."

April 25, 2008

Eran and I were talking about a new method developed in Israel called "the code." It was created by a young Israeli and it is supposed to work miracles. The process goes like this: 1. you think of someone close to you who is having difficulties in his or her life 2. you write down anything you can think of that this person is going through 3. you choose the one that appeals to you the most—hits you the most 4. imagine a situation that makes you feel the same way 5. write up a sentence that summarizes this 6. every day until the person receives peace or closure, you are to write this sentence.

I'm not sure just how much I buy this, but I gave it a try and it is supposed to create miracles. The book is in Hebrew, so I will just have to wait a while until I master the language, which should take something like 10 years.

I thought to write up a sentence about my relationship. He is going through so much right now and barely has the strength to keep himself going, let alone me. Instead of getting upset with him, which ultimately doesn't lead to anything constructive, I thought Eran's advice came at a good time. So I picked up the pen, wrote a few lines, and as a matter of fact, have to do that again before I go to bed.

Eran just heard that his father has prostate cancer, so he has also been doing the same, in hopes that this act will allow his father the opportunity to not feel that he has to be strong for everyone else—which can only make him weaker. As for myself, I have been thinking a lot about what I want for my own future—apart from having a family of my own—something altogether for myself. I think a life as a photojournalist is the most appealing since it will provide me the freedom I need, although perhaps not a whole lot of stability. I have been blindly going after an MA because I know that if I take anymore time off, I will most likely return to school in my 80s.

Life has taken so many unexpected turns. I only hope in the years to come, I will make some sense of it all.

April 25, 2008

It's peculiar how differently journaling functions from talking to a therapist. Because of all of the calculatedly nebulous questions, the real strength of therapy is the fact that you have to acknowledge someone observing your innermost thoughts. It's not so much how the therapist responds to what you have to say (as far as my experience has gone). Rather, it's the fact that the presence of someone at "the bedside of your mind" forces you into this situation of having to think of yourself as someone who is witnessed. You're not the version of yourself that you experience, the one wrapped up in all those normal consequentialist, exceptionalistic modes of thought. You're not allowed the tacit understanding that your concepts of right/wrong, good/bad, generous/selfish don't actually apply to you in all of these particular instances. It's a situation where you have to kind of hear your own words once-removed and take on, towards yourself, the attitude that you might take on in listening to a friend describe their fairly misguided, hurt, confused attitudes towards/opinions on a break-up they just had or something. Anyway, as there's no legitimate observer of the journal entry, the journal is much different. I had a conversation with Eric once where he asked me why I wanted to start journaling regularly. I told him that I wanted to make sure I wasn't missing opportunities to refine a day's half-baked thoughts, thus leaving them vulnerable to decay and/or loss. When I asked him whether he ever had that inclination he said, "No." Moreover, it seemed like he didn't particularly understand it. And in a way I understand that non-understanding, because if you're not really keen to how you're using the space, it can basically just become this site of extraordinary self-indulgence, rhetorically little different from the type of free-associative (or numbingly repetitive) conversations you might have with yourself when you're thinking about a particular thing, where you utter your rather adroitly-phrased musings on the thing and lines of bulletproof reasoning are so pleasing to your own ear. It's kind of the same

thing.

Also, I think I allow myself to be more strongly affected by environment than I'd like. For instance, I'd like it if I didn't kind of check out of social situations just because I'm in some shitty sports bar (or a shitty Chinese buffet) that I find to be aesthetically and/or sonically unpleasant. Simply, I wish that my ability to enjoy a social interaction was impervious to things like the presence of numerous ESPN-tuned television sets and bland corporate color palettes.

Oh, and I realized why Daniel always smells like weed and wears sports coats. In spite of the day's heat, he wore a corduroy blazer, which I'm pretty sure was simply a comfortable means to conceal his pipe. And I'm fairly certain that the reason he always smells like weed is because he's constantly just shoved a still-smoldering pipe back into his jacket pocket. According to the story he told tonight he once spent 13 days in jail for having a trunk full of weed because the bail bondsman in this tiny town he happened to be in was out of town on a two-week vacation.

April 25, 2008

Had to take 3 Tylenol PMs to get to sleep last night because I was so anxious about my Constitutional Law exam. I was right to be anxious, because it was brutal. Four hours of writing. There were two personal-statement type questions that I could have gone to town on had I not been completely exhausted. As it was, I just eked out some nonsense about how there should be more checks and balances on George W's plenary executive power. Ugh. Then I went and got pretty drunk and smoked a lot of cigarettes, and now my lungs hurt and I've used my inhaler about 10 times in the past 2 hours. Went 7 years without smoking and then poof, I'm back in it again. Law school is bad for my health.

April 25, 2008

It's the last day of finals week, and I've got some grading left, and a paper to write that was due sometime in the spring of 2007. Well. I've got this new idea for a campaign/ad-project/whatever wherein people all answer the question: what are you doing to impeach the president? I'd be able to honestly state that I've picked-up (barely) juggling in order to impeach the president. When you talk about impeachment, people's eyes glaze and they doze off. Or, they begin, immediately, to extract their interest and generosity through any number of reflexively-logical justifications. It's patronizing at least, and civically reprehensible at worst. I don't know what's wrong, what should be done, or why; I am just petitioning that it be considered. Now, to be completely honest, that is a lie. I do have ideas on what's wrong, what should be done, and why; in fact, I'm quite certain that all others, everyone, has similar ideas. And that, given the time, space, and fealty-to-each-other to discuss it openly and democratically, we could come to a consensus on what should be done, and why. That's why I've taken up juggling.

April 25, 2008

Last night I dreamt that as I was driving my scooter down a back mountain road. I saw a bus with every piece of outdoors and adventure equipment you could ever need attached to it. As I pull up beside the bus, I see that Jerry Garcia is driving it and tells me to drive aboard. He lowers a ramp on the back for me to drive my scooter on. I sit down next to him and he tells me that I am now on the bus of "wondrous desires" and anything I desire the bus will provide for me. I tell him I desire to have a jam session. As I look behind me, the interior of the bus turns into a plush recording studio with ridiculously nice guitars and some musicians. It makes me get to wondering...I ask him, "Am I dead?" and he replies, "Only if you're grateful." He lets out a silly belly laugh as we drive into my summer break.

Dear God,

I would like to look less silly than my peach tree at the end of this whole season of pruning...if possible. I know we were using the word change, but you know how change terrifies me so I think if we use the word prune instead it will feel more 'romantically poetic' rather than 'depressingly traumatic'...maybe? Traumatic or not I'll still need lots of help. So today, show me what to cut off and what to grow. Help me to not do the things that don't matter but to more fully live and be and say what's important.

Give Jeannie wisdom and courage and the confidence to walk away. Show Paige how beautiful she is and help her know that even in her darkest places she is loved by you.

Thank you for Carol's wisdom and prayers, thank you for Shannon's magnolia tree, and Melissa's friendship.

Be with Matt, Haley, Josh and Brandon. Be with Frankie, Elaina, Aaron, Jackie and JC. Make my drive today with Kiriam meaningful and my time with Paige healing or comforting or fun or whatever she needs it to be.

But really today is yours, so do with it what you like.

April 25, 2008

It's spring and it's Friday and it's sunny and I wake up happy. The flowers on my walk in to the T are ridiculous and everywhere: daffodils and bluebells and my two favorite magnolia trees, which get Robert Lowell stuck in my head. Our magnolia blossoms. Life begins to happen.

I get iced coffee at Dado in Harvard Square and spend the morning at work reading Franz Wright poems and designing a website for an art benefit we're having in the fall. Franz Wright says, the tall blue starry strangeness of being here at all. I make the website green. I bought Franz

Wright's book *Walking to Martha's Vineyard on Wednesday*, when I spent an entire hour at the Grolier Poetry Bookstore geeking out with the manager, which was fantastic. I'm stressed out about the facebook application I'm supposed to design for one of our fundraisers. I'm way over my head coding-wise. Stupid facebook.

At lunch I walk around H&M and buy nothing. My boss sends me across the river to run an errand, so I'm out of work early, and going to my first Seder! Andrew comes over. We go to Arlington.

It's a gluten-free, vegetarian Seder with a statement read at the beginning about the importance of voting Democrat and respecting the Palestinians. Ahh, Boston. The similarities between the Seder and the Mass are myriad! Which makes sense, because the Last Supper was Passover, but it's fun to find the links: the washing of hands, the broken bread, the wine. I get a tiny toy wind-up frog as one of the plagues, and decide Judaism is delightful. The four mandatory glasses of wine don't hurt either, especially the way I count to four. I am drunk! My boyfriend is hilarious and adorable! I can't get over how endlessly astonishing all of this is, him, us.

We help clean up, hold hands, run down the street to wait for the bus. A girl comes by walking her dogs. Our shadows on the sidewalk; their warm, happy snouts.

April 25, 2008

I have this book of prayers that I read from every morning. It's a compilation (and modernization?) of the divine hours, saying prayers in the morning, noontime, vespers and compline. It's very beautiful and I like it very much—an easy way to mix guided prayer with personal reflection. Anyhoo. for the past year or so, whenever I read I try and make a concerted effort to say "father and mother" where the book only reads "father." You know, like, "our father and mother, who art in heaven..." etc. (Is art still the correct conjugation in the plural?) Today for some reason I thought, well, I always SAY mother, but do I really think about it? So while I was reading I purposefully tried to imagine that I was speaking to a divine mother. The truth is that even when I mention both genders in prayer, likely my subconscious conception of God continues being masculine without me even realizing it. So today I prayed directly to Mother God. It was very interesting! Without even trying I started to see all kinds of different meanings to the prayers, because all of a sudden things I've said a million times, like, "you gave your only begotten son" TOTALLY have a different color to them when you're talking about a mother instead of a father.

I know some feminists aren't into the whole 'mother' thing, because, as they rightly ask, why should the feminine have to be represented (or validated) by maternity? Shouldn't a divine woman be able to be God even if she has no children? If she's married but childless, or single, or with a whole host of consorts, whatever?! And they have a point when they ask this. But I'm still thinking on that one...and in the end, I'm very much a believer in the diversity of God. I'm sure there IS a divine female single childless presence—but there is probably then ALSO a motherly presence.

And a fatherly, and a bachelor, and a child, and a couple, and a wise old grizzled man on a rocker...you get the picture. Anyhow it was interesting how that TINY shift in how I spoke to God gave me whole new views on what MY words meant in prayer. Fun.

Today is the Passover Seder at my gay church, and I'm wearing the fancy shirt Ashlee brought me from India to lead it. Nice cultural diverse mix there. I'm excited! But I have to run home after work to make the charoset...I hope we have cinnamon, because I forgot to look. Esther's going to try and make matzoh because it's so BLESSED expensive here. (34 pesos for a medium sized box!! look that exchange rate up on the internet and shock yourself!) We shall see how that goes. We're also waiting to hear back from the real estate agent about the apartment we applied for on Monday. I really feel like they should tell us within FOUR DAYS, but then again, no one asked me. We'll certainly survive if they don't accept us, but it's annoying, even so.

It's occurred to me that this journal entry has a lot of explanation in it. I don't keep a personal journal anymore. My ramblings are very communal in nature. I wonder if that speaks anything to the way we express ourselves these days, when theoretically the whole internet can read our thoughts. (oops...slipped into some meta-journaling there.) Although on the other hand, I'm a Pathological Explainer. All my therapists tell me that. I am happiest when I am explaining something. So likely even a personal journal of mine would go into detail about what kind of prayers I say in the morning and why, that sort of thing. Not to say I assume that's interesting, of course....just the way I am.

CONFESSION: I admit I am following American Idol, although the broadcasts are a week behind here in Argentina. We just saw Kristy Lee Cook get voted off last night. My boss even talks about it at work! Funny phenomenon. I was in love with David Archuleta at first but after last week's (or the week before's?) 'Idol gives back' extravaganza... I'm totally fixated on Dr. Chase playing guitar in the famous tv people band! Totally cute! Hello!

Back to work....

April 25, 2008

Yesterday we moved Robert Green's studio. And this morning all of me is aching. Fucking aluminum panels...installing that work is going to be an incredible bitch. I almost hurt my back a few times, and yesterday my shoulder felt really over strained. Still feeling insecure at work about not being useful/good enough, which is an issue because every time I try to remedy that by working harder I fuck up and almost hurt myself, or the work. Painting is coming along, very nervous about the LACE show...and getting everything done. Terrified about the July show. I might need to ask to move back to Aug or Sept. I need some kind of positivity self-esteem boost, I keep feeling like I haven't had an original idea in my life. Olivier keeps calling. Not sure what to do there. Am frankly too busy to go to an awkward first date dinner with some kid that I was probably too drunk to even recognize now...how to tell him that, yo no se. But the attention is a

cheap thrill-esteem boost, so I'm dragging it out a bit.

The good news about the procrastination is that the apartment has never been cleaner, at least the parts that I have domain over. This place wouldn't suck so bad if dad would let me get rid of shit and move things around. Oddly, dude is one of the worst pack rats I've ever come across. I always thought that Kaitlin got it from Nana, but now I think it's from dad. I am DYING to redecorate this place and get rid of some of the crap here. He very literally lives with trash stuffed in every nook and cranny. I don't get it.

Dot is amazing. She is teaching herself how to chirp like a bird. It's the weirdest sound to hear, it sounds like some kind of incredibly odd bird that has been smoking 2 packs a day, and then you look over and realize it's the cart!

Kaitlin and I have never been closer than right now. Karlee and I either for that matter. Kaitlin and I are both reading various Sedaris books and are thinking that we would like to sit down and right some of our family's stories. If it ever got published it would probably have to be in the fiction section to make it believable, but I swear real life is the weirdest shit.

April 25, 2008

From 12-1 am I was at a party at the Terrace Apartments but it was really cold and I wasn't drunk so the guy that I am dating came and picked me up in his best friend's car on the way back from the dinner. We drove back to campus and went back to his room where his roommate was still awake. We all talked for a little while but eventually Zach and I got into bed. We were just cuddling while Alex, his roommate, read. Then he turned the lights off and we started hooking up in the bottom bunk. It was really frustrating. The room was really hot and I took off my skinny jeans so I could sleep. In the morning, I woke up at 10.30 to go back to my room and change. When I got up to put my pants on, Alex walked back into the room and it was really awkward. I went back, changed, and then went to breakfast at 11, which is what my friends and I do every MWF. I made myself scrambled eggs.

We walked to Art History where we were discussing Modern Art. The current lecturer is so intelligent it is confusing and I can't follow her train of thought. The theme today was Mirrors in Art, reflecting stereotypes and humanity. After Art History I went to Drawing class where we were partnered up and asked to create an invented composition of multiple figures. My partner was Rich, who is arguably the best artist in the class, and our situation was a convenience store. We took a more interesting route and drew a convenience store hold up. We took turns posing and drawing and the overall drawing came out really well. It was really interesting to work with someone with a different technique but I definitely think that I learned a lot from it.

I went to the retreat with my friends from drawing, Eve and Beryl, to get something to eat. I also needed to fill out my application to be a tour guide. I really struggled with the question "What

would you say if a prospective student asked you what the most disappointing part of Vassar is?" because honestly, I am not disappointed and I love it here. I left the retreat and laid outside of my dorm in the grass and talked on the phone to my mom. I wanted to tell her about the guy that I am dating because we never talk about that kind of stuff and I wish we did. But I couldn't fit it in to the conversation and I didn't know how to bring it up. A group of my friends walked by as they were going to Smokes 4 Less to buy cigarettes. My friend Anna bought some cigars for us to smoke later and I convinced her to buy a little blue pack of mini cigars. Anna and I wanted to go to Uno's and get cocktails but no one else did. Then we wandered around all of Poughkeepsie's most interesting stores, thus we were back to campus in 10 minutes. Anna and I wanted to take the shuttle to go to the mall to buy some sexy lingerie for an 1800s themed party later that night.

When we got to Main the shuttle was already full and leaving so we took a cab with a few other girls to the mall. We went to all of the trashiest stores trying to find something cheap that was appropriate for the 1800's party. We found some vests at H&M that were essentially sports bras with a corset front but we didn't feel like paying \$20 for them. We each did buy some really cute things, though. I bought a dress from Wet Seal that was so cute and Anna bought two pairs of shoes and a dress. Anna just broke up with her boyfriend and needed some retail therapy. Unfortunately, however, both of our cell phones died and we didn't know what time the Vassar shuttle left the mall but on the way to the mall in the cab I was sitting in the front seat and luckily memorized the phone number of the cab so we asked the T Mobile guys if we could borrow a cell phone and we called the cab company. We asked the driver to meet us outside of Macys in 15 minutes. When we went out there we realized that there were several entrances to Macys so we called her back and she said she would drive around.

Sitting outside we smoked one of the cigars that Anna bought earlier, one of the little ones that looked like a joint. We didn't really know how to smoke a cigar because you aren't supposed to inhale. So we sat out there for a while sharing a little cigar saying "this isn't the day I got broken up on a post it, it's the day I got arrested for smoking a doobie," one of the best sex and the city lines.

When the cab came to pick us up we had a long talk with the driver. She told us all about her three children, one of whom wanted to go to Vassar. It's funny, she told us she was bilingual and spoke English as if it was her second language but then she told us how English was her first language and she learned Spanish when she was much older. It was then that we realized that her accent was kind of hick. She dropped us off at my dorm where I grabbed my cell phone charger and put on my new dress. Anna and I did our makeup and then went over to her dorm to get her charger and a flask. While in her dorm we went up to Zach and Alex's room on the floor above where Alex's dad was. I showed Zach the intense hickey he had given me the night before. Anna and I went to the retreat to get something to eat because we hadn't eaten dinner yet. We filled up our orange juice containers with vodka making some classy screwdrivers to go with our sandwiches. Then her friend that goes to Bard came and we went to the 1800s party. The party was in Rockefeller Hall, an academic building where poli sci and philosophy classes are. They had several cases of jungle juice, wine, and vodka. The tap kept falling out of the jungle juice

container and it spilled all over the floor. Eventually we left because security was about to show up. We all went outside and Zach left to go to sleep because they had their last game the next day. I was standing outside with a bunch of people when my friend Ethan chose to get naked for no reason. We all walked over to the town houses where there was a band Neighborhood performing. The sound quality was terrible but everyone was pretty drunk so it was fine. Around 2 am I left the ths and walked back to my dorm completely barefoot because my 4 inch heels started to hurt. The path was rough and really hurt my feet. On the way back I ran into my friend Winston who was completely belligerent. I started walking him back to his dorm when he started trying to kiss me. I kept pushing him back but he was too drunk to even know what was going on. Eventually I said Lathrop is that way and pushed him into his own dorm. I knew I couldn't hook up with him, not only were we both too drunk but there was Zach, and Winston had just hooked up with Anna the night before. I went up to my friend's room in my dorm and was so tired that I started to fall asleep in her bed. I went up to my room and passed out.

April 25, 2008

Didn't do much again today. Watched a lot of tv. Didn't read anything for like the 18th straight day. I don't think I felt or thought anything all day. I had to give up on writing an email to Alex about halfway through because I couldn't make the words or sentences work. At this point, waiting for summer I've become like an old man waiting for death. A real knight of infinite resignation. It's gotten to the point where basic activities like going to the grocery store or human courtesies like listening to people when they talk have become overwhelming chores. I get annoyed when anyone says more than one sentence to me. I feel like a pretty horrible person in a lot of ways. And unhealthy. Yet somehow untroubled: it's kind of the opposite of the summer before my first bike trip, where I was trying to make myself strong & healthy. This time I'm kind of waiting for the trip to do it for me. Fearlessness has its downsides, I guess.

April 25, 2008

12 am Who knew mopping could be so tiring? I'm exhausted and trying to write my papers. Instead I'm discussing taste in boys with a friend on aim. Pull up fb of my ex, see new pics from spring break.

His ex, beaches, bikinis, alcohol. Terrific.

12:10 am Phone call from current boy who just got off an 18-hour day of work. I'm distracted, he gets pissed.

12:12 am Internet goes out. Shaken, I'm texting best friend to figure out shit. Texting current boy, but he falls asleep in the middle.

2 am Feeling sick, can't fall asleep. SHE CHEATED ON HIM with his best friend. TWICE.

7 am Alarm goes off, time to write paper.

7:30 am Alarm goes off, really time to write paper.

snooze

snooze

snooze...

9:30 am Shit. Time to go shopping with mom.

10:30 am Arrive at the fitting place. Some woman named Anita keeps poking at my mother's scars and can't explain the sizing number for the bra inserts. Arbitrarily decide on size 4a, pick two styles, and fill out insurance paperwork for "mastectomy prosthesis."

1 pm Home again. Check ex's fb wall. Favorite items from his ex:

:) Thanks for talking my ear off

I can't wait to come visit you in LA!!!

Thanks for letting me stay with you!

O and lots of spooning!

I'm waiting for you to show up with a margarita!!! I thought you would be here by now tho :(

Lovely. Why didn't anyone tell me? Best friend is MIA.

3 pm Okay, papers are all going to be late soon. Have to go pick up mom's wig. It's in the wrong color. I send it back. My response shocks even me—the poor woman can't help me stop crying, and I feel bad for her. Is that strange?

Apparently hair always falls out on the 19th day of chemo. Pray we'll get it back before then.

5 pm Cook dinner

8 pm Go out with friends for a beer. Boyfriend texts me, fight is over, I secretly forfeit the fight over the ex. It's not worth the entry fee.

11 pm Get in bed, listen to the storm outside.

April 25, 2008

I had the absolute worst dream last night. It was a mix of the reality TV show Rock of Love and Shakespeare's Hamlet, complete with adultery, murder, and suicide. I woke up crying. But thank Buddha it wasn't one of those horrible dreams that sink into you and stay with you all day. By the

time I brushed my teeth, all the leftover feelings were gone.

I was fifteen minutes late to work, as usual. I always think they'll say something besides "good morning" but after three months still no sign of contempt. I filed papers for about a total of 20 minutes. The rest of the time was spent pretending to organize papers on my desk. I made a couple inappropriate sex jokes to G. I don't even think he got them, but it made me smile. I left work early pretending I was going to read for class, but instead I took a drive and went by the water. Traffic was shit, and it took me a half hour to get back on campus. I read Foucault, and half of the Armstrong, the last one I looked at...kind of. I always feel shitty when I don't do all the readings. I always say I just don't have the time, but in all honesty I do.

I went to class. I talked to the professor after everyone left. Like I'm in second grade again, I'm afraid someone will start calling me an ass kisser. I watched Gilmore girls. Rory dropped out of Yale. I used to hate that fucking show.

I ate mozzarella sticks for dinner. They were my boyfriends...I did not leave him any. I hope he doesn't notice. I went back to school for that group play we have to do for Shakespeare. I haven't read the play yet. Somehow I got matched up with over achievers, and I wound up with the least lines of everyone. Thank goodness.

I went to my friend's dorm. We went to get a milkshake. It took an hour, because neither of us knows shit about this town. We finally found the 'right' kind of milkshake on the third ice cream parlor. I read some comic books. I can't remember their names, which is shameful because I read them about 20 minutes ago. I came home, fed the cat...I love my cat. Poe is the most awesome cat ever. It's weird though, I get her this all-natural kitty food, and there's friggin peas in it! Weird shit, man.

I was supposed to start on my ten page paper by now. It's Friday night. And I'm here. Alone. Again.

Sincerely wish I was there.

P.S. I gave G. the Rimbaud/Verlaine poem "Sonnet of the Asshole." I always laugh at the pralines part!!!

April 25, 2008

Today was a pretty good day. I was feeling kind of crappy when I got up due to my allergies, but a ride in my jeep with the top down always makes me feel good and it did the job.

Work was good too. I got a lot done this week and it was great to actually see the results of my work. It was definitely one of the better weeks at work. Tonight I had dinner with my friends from

the cigar shop. We had a great dinner and the company was worth it. I am so glad to have these friends and feel very lucky. I am a little drunk writing this. night night world. See you tomorrow!!!

April 25, 2008

Tired this morning—hanging out with friends last night, didn't get enough sleep. Get up at 7, get to work at the Selby public library by 8. With the help of a certain substance, it seems I was able to kick my coffee addiction earlier this week! So today, I'm not too groggy. I'll see how far I can get without caffeine.

At work, I proceeded to start moving old magazines from the downstairs area to the upstairs archive room. Came across a special issue of *The Lancet*, full of short stories based on medical info. Read a story about a sleep-disorder doctor who is visited by a very sleepy-looking man, who proceeds to interrogate the doctor about what he thinks might happen if humans stopped sleeping. Then he starts to talk about all the crazy stuff his brain can do now that he doesn't sleep—he can use more brainpower, and has even gained abilities that let him move things with his mind, read others' minds, and set fire to things. The doctor starts getting freaked out and eventually insults the man. The man leaves, and then the doctor finds he can't open his office door, and it starts to get really hot in the room, etc etc... Before you know it, the doctor has a heart attack or something. Eh. Sounds nice—it's a tasty idea that we would somehow work better without sleep, but the reality is pretty alarming. Sleep-deprivation studies show that people just kind of shut down and get stupid after a while.

Spent some time doing menial tasks at work. Later, in the Reference workroom, I talked about my boss with co-workers. There's a growing divide going on, and a pretty low morale among the people I work with. It increasingly makes work very unpleasant. Worked an hour on the Reference Desk, and when my shift was over I slyly escaped an elderly couple who wanted me to research an array of consumer reports on CD players.

What to do about lunch? Already bought a salad, but Michelle's lunch hour is at the same time, so we decide to go to the new Word of Mouth that opened where Metro used to be. Real crowded, good to see. I always said it would be awesome if there were a Word of Mouth downtown, as First Watch's breakfast doesn't really cut it for me. I eat a roast beef panini, with red pepper and havarti cheese. Mmm! It is served with pasta salad, the pasta in question being orecchiette, which means "little ears."

Back to work, and an email exchange with some semi-retarded FSU financial aid people. Come on, people, learn to communicate! Another hour on the Reference Desk, fielding some regular questions, nothing too exciting today. Afterwards, I weed some old Business Ref books. We have to throw away a lot of stuff all the time, because we always have more coming in.

Somebody's been stealing our library's copy of the magazine *Paris Match*. They're crafty about it,

too. I notice it's not in its place, so I wander around, hoping I can spot someone about to steal it, so I can call the security guard, or at least embarrass the person into not doing this anymore. No luck. The magazine returns to its spot later in the day.

Afternoon mail has arrived! I sort it for everyone, then take the magazines and newspapers upstairs to stamp and check in, before working one more hour on the Ref Desk, which is uneventful.

5:30 pm—home! Michelle and I lay in bed, being lazy. I call some friends, to see if anyone wants to go out for dinner or just hang out. No dice. We decide to go to the Thailand restaurant in Gulf Gate.

First, we stop by the Wine Warehouse, because we've been wanting to buy a good bottle of port. We talk to one of the store owners, who we met a year ago. He's real friendly, and is able to give us a very fascinating explanation of the different types of port: what the different designations mean, how vintners can use certain words to sneakily make their wine seem more impressive, intricacies of vintage dates and blending of different years, etc. This is why I try to only buy wine here—the employees are not snobby, and will talk to you very straightforwardly, and make you want to know more. We end up selecting a 20-year Colheita tawny port. Colheita means it's a single-year vintage (not blended with younger wines), and tawny means it is aged in wooden barrels, which oxidizes the wine a bit. Tawny port is drier than ruby port, and generally takes on a browner color.

We move along to Thailand, and the inside is very impressive. I've always thought Bangkok Thai gets its reputation in town more because of the lavish decor than the food. Well, now they've got some competition. And the food is very good here. I go with the pad thai, which is very balanced and tasty, not too eggy. Michelle has the rad-nar noodles with scallops. Very tender scallops.

After dinner, we head back home and open the port, pour a couple of glasses. Smoke a little pot as well, and watch the episode of *The Office* that aired the night before. Then we watch a *Planet Earth* episode on the deep sea, then some *Mr. Show*. By then I'm tired, and I go to sleep in order to get enough rest before work the next day.

Not a terribly exciting day, but a good one nonetheless.

We made such progress this week—Monday Gail cried and swore at me a few times, but the rest of the week really picked up. We even danced to J-tim in my car a bit while I drove her home. But today they told her she was going to respite, that she wasn't going home, and she was crying before I even showed up. We regressed completely. "Gail McDonald!" I had to keep saying, "Your screaming and yelling does not scare me. You cannot push me around. I am sorry you don't want to go to respite, but this is my job. You cannot take it out on me." And five seconds later I would have to remind her again, "Gail McDonald. Do not hit me. I do not hit you. Do not yell at me. I do not yell at you. We will respect each other and work together." We inched our way to my car. Literally. And I was kicked and elbowed and sworn at ("BUCKOFF!" she says) and cried on. A

half an hour later we were driving. She was still crying, but at least we were on our way. After a few more swears and hair grabs, she started to calm down. Instead of screaming, she whimpered. This afternoon I didn't like Gail. I was trying so hard to be compassionate, but she was being such a bitch, and she was treating me like shit. So even when she quieted down, I didn't even try to have a conversation with her. "There is a crack in everything," Leonard Cohen says, and Gail's crack kept getting bigger and bigger today. It was just spreading—to the point of brokenness. But just as she was starting to cry again, she picked up my hand from the stick shift, wrapped it in her tiny snot-covered Christmas mitt, and kissed it. "But that is how the light gets in."

April 25, 2008

I've been acting somewhat uncharacteristically lately. I decided to start a petition for the alums about the move-in date stuff. While I still feel convicted that starting the petition was the right thing to do, admittedly, I am sort of freaked out. Luckily, I don't really have to worry about getting fired because I only have a few weeks left in my job anyway and there isn't anyone else who knows how to do it. So, it just wouldn't be worth their while. There are some other somewhat problematic potential implications though.

1. Now I can't contact Michalson effectively regarding improving the manager compensation because I will already be perceived as a rabble rouser. I'll just have to hope that something gets changed as a result of what I wrote for Dawn in my budget narrative

2. I am probably making myself persona non grata with residence life, so I feel like I can no longer count on getting to live in the house this summer. Although having to sublet is maybe for the best anyway since I probably could have only stayed in the house through July anyway and that really isn't long enough.

I am also nervous about when the time comes to actually give the petition to the administration and the alumni association. I hope I can find an alum friend to accompany me. I am really way too shy to be in charge of something like this. I am also feeling sort of weirdly famous, and I never really like that.

So basically there are a lot of things up in the air right now. I need to find a job. I need to figure out where I will live this summer. I need to find out my fall schedule in terms of starting stuff in Virginia. I need to gain some sort of understanding of what living in my family is going to be like now that my parents are getting divorced. Etc.

I am generally looking forward to the future though. After a year of Four Winds stuff, I have sufficiently reminded myself of how much more I like school than actual jobs. Grad school obviously isn't going to be as fun as New College was though. Nonetheless, I feel very ready to start grad school, and I am happy that I don't have to teach until my second year, because that will give me sufficient time to get situated, develop a sense of place, understand how the culture

and system of grad school work, hopefully do really well academically from the beginning, make friends, develop personal habits, figure out what my favorite restaurants are and where I like to buy food, etc. (Those aren't in order of importance.) The one major downside to grad school starting soon is that I have to end a romantic relationship that I am currently really happy with. My weird current family situation is also going to make the moving process strange and unpredictable. Also, one of the worst parts of this summer will be going home and staying in my old house with Dad and having to sort through all of my childhood things and get rid of most of them. I am going to miss my room that I had growing up. I never had really pictured that it would be gone, since I thought that my parents would live in that house for at least another decade. Right now I'm trying to just see all of this as another impetus pushing me along the way towards becoming grown up.

I hope next year will be filled with exciting adventures, and that the problems at New College will be resolved. It's always hard to predict the future though.

April 25, 2008

The lead has been falling out of my pencils and fillings. You'd think that wood and teeth would keep small bits of metal in their place properly, but apparently that's not the case. As the physicality of lead drops, so does the price of gold soar, and those lucky enough to have their fillings made of gold instead are ripping out their teeth and cashing in at the bank. Doubtlessly we'll see more break-ins to gold-laden churches and rococo housing or art as the global economy spirals downward. What else? Gold teeth? Goldschlager? Old Gold cigs? I don't think they have any gold in them, but that's Tom Waits's brand. Unfiltered. Grizzled ol' bastard.

I can't find the reverse (or mirror-image, I guess) function on my copier. What will become of me? I've already worked out a solution to the hardship that currently puts me in, but it leads me to wonder what would happen if other reverse functions disappeared too. Like on my car. Or in role reversal situations. What if you couldn't put yourself in someone else's shoes? Guess you wouldn't know what a drag it is to see you...

How often do you take your own advice? And how often should you? You're not very impartial, after all. Back to pencils...when I was in middle school, I was too shy to get up and sharpen my pencil when it broke. And they always broke. So I'd just chip away at the wood with my fingernails. They'd get all black, with splinters underneath them. Eventually, I got a hand held sharpener, but it didn't have one of those shaving capture bins, so I'd shave it into the bottom pocket of my backpack. That way, everything else would be black and smudged instead of my fingers.

April 25, 2008

I'd like to say that I learn something everyday, that I can glean something everyday, that I can squeeze some nugget of truth out of the day, but I can't. Not always. Today was uneventful. Or maybe it was eventful, but I've gotten used to the events.

The seventh graders were noisy and restless as usual (is there a better word that combines these two?). They were buzzing. That works. They were a-buzz, and I gave them a vocabulary test and had them read some poetry out loud that they had written yesterday when I wasn't there. I was at a technology conference yesterday.

I wish I could say that I learned something yesterday, but really, I didn't. I was reminded of the fact that kids today have shorter and shorter attention spans—even without the formal diagnoses—and technology must be used to make learning fun. Because they don't value it on their own. Learning is like some bitter pill that's got to be wrapped up in a piece of lunchmeat. That's how we used to give pills to my old dog. Seventh graders like medication wrapped in corned beef, don't they? Probably.

Today, they were reading haiku and limericks out loud—haiku about their lovely little dirtbikes and limericks that weren't funny:

I love my dirtbike
I go over jumps and stuff
I don't wear helmets (weirdly enough, I have mixed feelings about this...)

and

I went to a party last night
And we all started flying a kite (how many people were holding the spool?)
We played Playstation for an hour
Got bored and then we put it away and ate some candy that was really sour
And then someone got in a fight (apparently, never mix Halo 3 with Zours)

Hard-working adolescent writers need to blow off steam and what better way to do that than to have a Hawaiian-themed dance? Personally, I can't think of a better way. Neither can my wife, who is more than eager to watch the 7th and 8th grade drama unfold. Some girls do nothing but cry there, and I can't say that I blame them. They come to these dances with their best clothes and make-up on while the boys wear worn jeans and ball caps, pretty much ignore the girls, and stuff their faces with \$1 pizza (lukewarm Fox's—that's why it's only \$1).

During the dance, I was semi-preoccupied with the Penguins-Rangers playoff game, and since it was coinciding exactly with the time of the dance, I had one of my friends text me with updates. The Penguins won, coming back from a 3-0 deficit to win. Sometimes, finding out piece-by-piece

is more exciting than actually watching the game. At least, that's what I try to tell myself.

One important thing I learned today...if you are making a breakfast sandwich, don't mix in milk with the scrambled eggs. On a plate the eggs are fine, but on a sandwich they're a moist and runny disaster, and the hole in the bagel does absolutely nothing to help the matter.

I woke up at someone else's house and realized that I no longer liked cats. This was not the first morning I thought of this but it really hit me hard today. I don't like the cat's hair all over me. All morning I could not decide what to do with myself. Should I go to the beach? Should I ride my bike? Should I clean up all this cat hair? I did none of the above. I drove my car back home and decided to draw pictures in my book where I write down all my affirmations. While drawing my mind was focused and at ease until I realized that I was now late for work. Went to work. Came home and drank some wine at my house where there aren't any cats.

April 25, 2008

My smoke-filled silence was invaded when the door opened and a gust of drunken ramblings blew the carefully crafted smoke rings into the back room to be summarily macheted by the window fan. I sighed as they entered, like a troupe of howler monkeys fighting over the last mango. I turned down the tv and watched the sophomoric antics of noogies and forehead slapping. I was amused admittedly but then went back to my quiet ruminations. I hadn't been invited to the "couples" dinner they were returning from, having apparently imbibed large quantities of alcohol. I wasn't sad however, because I sold \$312 worth of cigars and accessories while they were spending an equal amount of money on their bacchanalian feast. So I'll end my journal entry for the evening with some words of wisdom from Sartre. "Hell is other people."

April 25, 2008

Today I worked a 6-hour shift at my job at Subway, which, after several shifts that lasted 8 or more hours, was somewhat of a breeze. That was a relief. I am adapting to this job. The only way I can survive a mindless job like this (and it seems pretty much all jobs are mindless) is to sort of divide myself. I have one self that sort of retreats inwards and contemplates, and then I consciously train my outer self to repeat things like "spicy, honey, or regular mustard?" and "cucumbers and carrots too?" in response to the proper customer-generated stimuli. I feel a little bit hollow doing this. It doesn't always work, either. Sometimes the inner, contemplating me (the "real" me in this context) just cannot bring himself to care enough to convince the outer, functional me to function well. In fact, this has been a problem throughout my whole life. Today I realized that I am a person who just cannot force himself to care about things that he just don't care about. I've tried so hard, many times in my life. I've tried to be good, to be upstanding, to be productive, virtuous, to care about life's practical side and to really make the world better in a concrete way. But I keep

coming back to this inner vacuum, these same questions I've been asking since I was 14. It's the only thing I really enjoy, this sort of philosophical digestive process that keeps my inside gears turning. Lately the hunger has seemed especially voracious, which is unfortunate, because apathy toward external world is not a very marketable skill in the real world, which I am supposed to be a part of now. On the other hand, this hunger is probably related to the realization that my hunger is not going to be sated by college in the way I expected. My very subjective, inner focus wasn't really that great of a quality in college, either. College (and New College in particular) is probably the sort of lifestyle that most supports this attitude, but even here, it didn't really work that well. College is a means to an end, and those that refuse to think of it that way are going to suffer disappointment. I certainly did. Then there's the guilt over being a completely self-absorbed philosopher type. "What are you doing for the world?" This guilt has also followed me around since age 14 or 15. I saw my friends' self-respect skyrocket with the adopting of values, ethics, and principles that they put into action. I've tried to concretely express my fair share of inner convictions, but I always falter and fail, and end up retreating inward into a relativistic void that makes me wonder whether I'll ever be able to know for certain that I can do anything good. I'll stew for a while in this primordial, chaotic state, and then I'll always re-emerge with a newfound optimism, confidence, and grace. Only I don't know what's going to get me out of it this time. Adult life carries none of the promise of unbridled idealism that college did. The "adult" values of self-sufficiency, determination, and responsibility appeal to me, though I wish I could embody them as expressions of inner virtue rather than as necessities of material existence.

Back to the philosophical digestion. The same types of thinking keep coming back, even over things I'd thought I had solved. I can sometimes literally feel the words run down my alimentary canal, as if I was digesting something. It's a good feeling, but sometimes it feels like I am eating myself from the inside.

I read *Jerusalem Moonlight* by Zen Master Norman Fischer for my thesis and his confusion over time keeps coming back to me. At one point he says, "Nobody understands time." Later he says, "I am time, and time is me." These are interesting statements. Zen Master Brad Warner has sort of solved all my philosophical problems when he wrote (and I am paraphrasing), "Where did this moment come from? Where will it go when it is gone? I don't know. Neither did the Buddha or Dogen." This type of thinking really helps when I get into a mode where I am regretting everything. It reminds me that I am just not in control. I can try to do my best, but in the end existence just arises each moment and no one really knows why or how things happen. It's a relief to think this way when the register won't work, when there are nickels spilled all over the counter and everyone is staring at me as I make a total buffoon of myself. And I'm thinking maybe I should have had more focus in my life, trained myself to do more things that I didn't feel like doing instead of playing guitar and reading whatever books I felt like reading. Sometimes I wish I were a more systematic thinker, but it always comes out like this, a powerful beginning, ending in a twisty vine without a real conclusion.

April 25, 2008

I was talking today with a friend who told me that he doesn't believe in free will. There is an aspect of this idea that reflects the logical conclusions of Buddhist teaching: everything is conditioned by everything else. Nothing exists separately. Things arise dependent on everything else. What could I possibly keep for myself? I can't even say that my own will is strictly my own.

At the same time, Buddhist practice feels like a response to the exact opposite conclusion: I take responsibility for saving all beings, even when in a strict sense I have control over nothing. This relates to something I'm working through in Hershock's article "Valuing Karma": "By invoking the kusala/akusala contrast, the Buddha subtly directs attention away from what is simply 'good' or 'bad' or even 'better' or 'worse' to the process of holistically bettering how things are coming to be" (Hershock 2005: 193).

The question is not whether the situation is "good enough." The world will never be "good enough"; it is characterized by suffering. The question is, how can I rest on the teaching of awakening and orient myself to that awakening?

April 25, 2008

NOTE TO SELF::: CANCEL THAT FREE NETFLIX SUBSCRIPTION BEFOOOOREE 05/06/2008, MEANING CANCEL BEFORE UHH NOT NEXT THURSDAY BUT THE ONE AFTER THAT.

IN FACT-- CANCEL THAT SUBSCRIPTION ON THE FIFTH. THE FIFTH. WEDNESDAY.. RELIGIOUS ENTHUSIASM IN AMERICA DAY. DO ITTT

April 25, 2008

I woke up in New Zealand. It was a holiday, Anzac Day, the equivalent of Veterans Day in the United States. I had lots of errands to do, but didn't feel like doing any of them. It was rainy and windy outside. I stayed in bed indulging in dreams until I got a text on my phone. It was from a new friend. He asked if he could he come over for a cup of tea. So he visited for a few hours. We stretched out on the bed and talked about music and childhood. Drank tea. It was still raining when he left. I made falafel and watched bad afternoon television. Before going to bed, I added a few touches to an oil painting I've been working on. Then I went back to Dreamland.

April 25, 2008

6:15 am Alarm goes off. I pat hubby on the shoulder and tell him to get out of bed and since he's getting up he can wake up the daughter so she can get ready for school. I lay back in the bed trying to go back to sleep but having trouble. Listen to hubby fart in the bathroom a couple of times and decide to get up. Throw some clothes on and go downstairs.

6:30-7 am Sit around on the computer for a while. Check email, facebook and mommy sites. Nothing really going on. I think to myself its only 7 am and I'm bored already. Crap

7 am Baby wakes up so I go upstairs to get her. Get a toy thrown at my head but I successfully dodge it (I've got a lot of practice). Get her out of bed and lay her on the floor for a diaper change. Tell her several times to stop rolling over so I can change her diaper. Try to distract her with Mickey Mouse on the diaper so she will lay still long enough for me to get it on her. Take her downstairs.

7:10 am Put baby in high chair so I can fix her breakfast. Listen to her whine because I haven't magically spit it out of my butt yet. Tell her over and over that its coming to just hang in there. Fix some grits and a glass of milk for the kid. Grits are too hot so I stick them in the freezer to cool them quickly. This still gets complaints out of said baby. Roll my eyes and walk around aimlessly in the kitchen while I wait for the grits to cool. Once grits are cool I give them to her with a spoon in hopes that today she will be slightly less messy than yesterday.

7:20 am Clean the kitchen while baby eats her grits, spreads them on her clothes, flings them on the floor and shoves them in her nose. Ignore the dogs pawing at the back door to get in. I walk over to the garbage can and sigh loudly because hubby forgot to take out the trash again. Pull out the garbage bag, put on my flip flops and go to take out the trash to realize hubby didn't roll the outside garbage can back in. Sigh again and go to the end of the driveway to get the can.

7:30 am Continue to clean the kitchen. Unloading the dishwasher and putting the dirty dishes in. Examine the mold growth in one of the bowls and make a mental note to remind daughter to empty her bowl before putting it in the sink. Mentally complain to myself about too many soda cans that have not made it to the recycling bin. Says screw it and tosses the cans in the trash. Start dishwasher and decide I need a break.

7:45 am Baby decides she is done with her grits by throwing the bowl to the ground. Go to clean off the baby and she fights me every step of the way. Exclaim FINE just go. Let her down to run around the house. Turn on Disney channel for her. Put mattress in front of stairs so she doesn't climb (hubby doesn't like to use baby gates because they peel off the paint).

8:00 am Decide to get a bowl of cereal. Try to sneak into the kitchen without baby seeing me, but no luck. Have to put some Applejacks in a bag for her too so she will go away. Take my Applejacks and sit back in front of the computer. Play some bingo on facebook (actually won

twice today...I feel special). Baby comes in and throws plastic bag at me. That was my signal to get up and get her some more. Go to get more Applejacks, realize the first bag is scattered all over the floor. Sigh again. Leaves it and hopes the dogs like Applejacks.

8:30 am Get pissed off at bingo, go look at other sites. Sniff armpits and realize I desperately need a shower. Tell the baby to stop getting into the cabinets...again.

9:00 am Baby runs over to me and I get a whiff of fresh poop. Ask baby if she pooped, she laughs and runs away. I go upstairs to get diapers and come back down and change her diaper. Poop is fun. Yay.

10:15 am Baby throws temper tantrum and I pick her up to put her down for a nap. She kicks and screams in protest.

10:25 am Get a call from hubby. He's on his way home for lunch but he has to work late. Great. So I get to haul the kids to soccer by myself.

10:45 am Go to poop. Run out of toilet paper. Sigh loudly again.

10:50 am Hubby comes in and I give him a kiss. Fix myself a salad as hubby fixes himself something to eat. We both sit back in front of the computer.

11:00 am I tell hubby I'm bored. I started a blogspot page so that entertains me for a while. I get up to take my plate into the kitchen and hubby comes up behind me and dry humps me. Awesome.

11:45 am See hubby out the door and go back to the computer. Still thinking about taking a shower.

12:00 pm Play around on facebook and make a bunch of posts on my mommy's site.

1:15 pm Go upstairs to get cell phone. Calls mom to see if she got an email I sent her. Takes a bath while I'm up there. MMM pomegranate and mango, much better than armpit smell. Examine ass in mirror and wonders why it's getting bigger. Then wonders why I'm wondering because I know why. I'm pregnant duh.

1:30 pm Get out of tub, get dressed and go back downstairs to the computer. Reveling in the quiet that nap time provides.

1:39 pm Get text message from hubby saying he loves me. That cheers me up a bit

1:45 pm Run out of bingo credits.

2:00 pm Post more on the mommy sites

2:52 pm Butt goes numb from sitting in front of the computer too long

3:00 pm I hear the baby playing upstairs. She didn't fall asleep until 12:30. As long as she is quiet. I go to the bathroom. Baby shoves toys in her potty, then tries to shove toys between my legs into the toilet. Not gonna happen sister.

3:02 pm Open the front door to see if oldest daughter is home yet. No signs of the bus. Close the door and baby screams because she wants to go outside. Again, not going to happen. Throw some chicken and cheese on a plate for baby (we ran out of bread) and plop it on her tray. She doesn't want to sit in her high chair. Turn on Dora, put the tray on a chair in the kitchen so she runs back and forth grabbing food and runs back to the tv. Whatever works. The dogs will clean up the scraps later.

3:04 pm Oldest daughter comes in. Baby babbles to her. Oldest yells and scares her, which scares me too. Ask daughter if she has homework, she screams in some weird voice no. Then gets a pop tart. Kid lives off of pop tarts and I let her because I'm an awesome mom like that. Daughter reminds me of her soccer game tonight. (Obviously I can't see the big sign that says SOCCER GAME 5:15 on the fridge).

3:12 pm Decide to finally get dressed for the day. Can't go to soccer in pj's as much as I would like to. Squeeze between the mattress and the wall to get up the stairs. Sort through the underwear to make the big decision, cute or comfy. Decide to go with comfy because hubby will give it up no matter what I'm wearing. Get dressed and brush my hair. Come back down stairs. Daughter asks to check her email. And continues to babble some nonsense (pre teen girls talking so fast you only understand every fourth word). I just say uh huh now and then to act like I am listening

3:18 pm Realize I have a hole in the front of my shirt right under one of my boobs. Terrific.

3:23 pm Hear a crashing sound, assume it was baby and yell her name. Get up to go see what it is. Daughter yells "that was me" as she hands me the phone and informs me someone wants to talk to me. Now my hair salon knows I am a freak.

3:52 pm Yell at the baby for grabbing my drink and throwing it all over the floor. Play Snood.

3:56 pm Get pissed off at Snood because it didn't give me the right colors, curse loudly and quit the game.

4:10 pm Mom calls. We have a discussion on breastfeeding. Criticize sister in law.

4:22 pm Realize, oh crap, we have to leave in a few minutes to get to the soccer field. Rush to get the kids ready. Smell another poop. Poops are great when you are in a rush.

4:32 pm Head out the door to the soccer field.

5:00-6:30 pm Chase the baby around the soccer grounds and attempt to keep her off the field, yet entertain her the entire time. Watch oldest daughter play soccer in between that.

6:45 pm Stop by Chick Fil'A for another healthy home cooked meal

7:00 pm Arrive at the house, see a Barnes and Noble package in the doorway. Do a happy jig on the sidewalk because I finally have some new stuff to read.

7:10 pm Family eats, answers a ton of phone calls during dinner. Get pegged by baby throwing French fries.

7:28 pm Tell hubby to put the baby to bed. Check email.

8:00 pm Take the inner geek test on a website. Find it hilarious, and score a 53.2544%, which puts me at Super Geek. Awesome! I heart geekiness.

8:32 pm Share my geek score with the entire cyber world.

9:00 pm Go watch Lost

9:02 pm Realize Lost doesn't come on until 10. Go back to the computer for an hour.

10:00 pm Round 2- Go to watch Lost.

10:15 pm Listen to hubby whine about how sick he is feeling.

11:00 pm Still wondering what is going on on Lost, but go to bed.

April 25, 2008

I didn't have to work, though I went in anyway for a couple of hours during the rush to observe, play back-up if my little duckling newbies needed their mamma duckling to help out at all.

First things first: The day started out with me waking up to no alarm at all except the internal body clock that says "I'm done." What a luxury that is...rolled out of bed to some wonderful conversation with my hub (who'd taken the boy to school while I slept). That rolled right into some wonderful conversation over breakfast out at Jeff's NY Deli. We're talking about hurt and forgiveness, he and I, commiserating over the similarities in our experience with our respective OSOs, or should I say XOSOs...we love these people as deeply as we know how which ends up

being pretty deep, and when they leave for their own good reasons, they can't help but leave a raw wound behind. After 16 years of mental labor, my hub and I swim deep in the waters of loving relationship, and it isn't until moments of heartache like the ones that have so recently passed for us that we realize just how deep that is. So we're learning to tread lightly in the world, in the ways of love, to swim in warmer, shallower waters without the loss of meaning, investment, and metaphorical depth that seems so intuitively linked to such a shift. And while all this is going on, we're talking, commiserating, learning from each other, and enjoying each other ever more deeply. Gotta love a paradox, it's where all the best truth is.

It was after breakfast that I went into work. How's that for segue? I saw a few of my cherished regulars while there, including one I have a slight crush on, hehehe, and found myself useful and observant, exactly like a good little manager. I'll have some pointers for my ducklings for next time. They're learning, bless their hearts. Makes me realize how comfortable I am at work, how good I am at what I do. It's a nice reminder.

Home. Home with the hub and the boy who's been picked up from school while I noodled around work, and we play with this cheesy plastic grocery store impulse buy made in china jai-alai toy that some friends brought over for him last weekend. It's fun, but not because of the game. It's good to spend some time with my sweet son, to laugh together and not be concerned about schedule, or how I've got to be at work so I won't see much of him that day, or how I'll miss a little league game because of rehearsal...again...it's good to be with him. We joke for a while about what the jai-alai scoop-shaped racket/glove/things are called, and decide after much discussion that it's probably something like muckaluckapickadoopa. Then we go inside and color with hub's prismacolors. Boy draws a robot with a hammer-hand and a vacuum-hand. I tell him that guy's probably really useful around the house. My little pragmatist..

Bit of a rough spot for half an hour getting him to put his clean laundry away, but he eventually does it after procrastinating for an hour and having treats taken away for 2 days. He didn't seem too worried about it, but at least his clothes are put away...and the regularly scheduled sleepover with grampah probably soothed whatever minor mental ache the offending half-hour incurred. Thank goodness for small favors and the grace of a good grandfather.

Finished off the night with a lovely date with hub, unintentionally Asian-themed! Really delicious sushi and my first-ever taste of eel. It was good, though the rough texture at the end was mildly disturbing. Overall I'd have to say I'd probably eat unagi again, even given my propensity for vegetarianism. More lovely conversation over sake, and an aim to treat our dinner as a celebration of letting go of those we love, of blessing them and sending them peaceably on their way, though they'd already gone before the blessing was given. Never too late for forgiveness and compassion and release, I guess. Yes, I did get a bit tipsy on the plum sake, oh well, it was fun and I wasn't driving. Continuing our Asian theme, we went to go see the new Jackie Chan/Jet Li film, The Forbidden Kingdom, which was sweet and fun and had great fight scenes and a surprising message of empowerment and inner peace that comes to those who allow it in themselves.

We smoked cloves in the truck on the way home, and for me the smoke was a prayer, a message, a farewell kiss, a warm-hearted message that maybe the wind will catch up and carry somewhere meaningful.

It was a good day...

April 25, 2008

This is the time in my life I've been waiting for. The moment where I stop, take a deep breath and just...appreciate. Our life is so 'in place' right now. When I look back, I'm able to fully recognize the choices that brought us to this moment in time where everything is just right. But more than that, I also accept that I/we are just blessed. I am surrounded by people whose lives are in turmoil just by chance alone. Not by choices or mistakes. Not by wrongdoings or karma. Bad shit has just happened to them and it sucks.

I have so much to say when it comes to people's crappy lives due to bad choices. I have advice, I have opinions, I have soapboxes. But when it comes to people dealing with sickness, death and the random shit that can forever alter your life, I've got nothing. Well, I take that back. I've got bad humor. I don't think it's because I lack compassion, I truly feel terrible about it. Bad luck sucks. Cancer, stomas, brain injuries, unexpected deaths, lost jobs—it all just sucks. And there are days when I feel like the bad luck is just truly unending, a depressing black hole that could just swallow you up. Unless, of course, you find some humor in the situation.

I hope to be able to do the same when my stroke of bad luck hits. Because it will hit. It hits all of us at one point or another. Admittedly some more than others, but we all get hit with random heaviness throughout our lives. When that time comes, some need to DO, some need to cry, some need to get angry, some need to crawl into a hole and hide. I need to laugh (then DO). So hopefully that explains my need to make bad jokes when people come to me for a shoulder to cry on. I'm not good with the crying—but hopefully I can make you laugh.

In the meantime, I am completely absorbed in the Now. This moment in time when my life is good, happy, peaceful and secure. I won't stress Chris' dirty socks in the middle of the floor, my moody toddler or a recently forgotten unpaid bill. I won't bitch about upcoming elections, crazy family members or the fact that our electric outlets are going dead one at a time. Because all that is trivial in comparison to real problems and I know it. I get it. And more than anything, I appreciate it.

April 25, 2008

M got into a fight with A and so A uninvited her to her going-away party. So C,T, K didn't go, and I was taking a nap and found out about it later and didn't go either. Inertia, and I didn't want

to go hang out with some strangers and A. I hope A doesn't think my absence meant that I was taking sides. I am not perceptive, I don't know what to do about these things.

B threw A's party, and it was a white-trash party. The idea of white-trash parties is offensive. I was thinking a few days ago about how similar they are to ghetto parties or whatever, where upper class white snots put on giant football jerseys and they fake gold teefs and pretend they're back and urban and poor. Like the CocoRosie singer who said she liked them because they allowed her to participate in black culture without actually having to be around black people. M had made crustless triangle sandwiches with Wonderbread and pimiento cheese spread for the party, and we reminisced about eating terrible food in our childhoods and ate them all.

This morning I got up very early with K and T and went to help out with an anti-smoking commercial for M's job. For something called the Quit Line, that smokers can call for help with "smoking cessation." We drove to Ellenton, where this woman's accountant's neighbor had a lanai with a sliding glass door. This allowed the camera guy to shoot a girl on the lanai smoking, as a party for people with long-sleeved, solid-color shirts goes on inside. The girl's friends are making their fun very obvious and she is miserable. Her smoke-free friends beg her to join them but she is a smoker, meaning that she never stops, I guess, because somehow the message is that she can't go inside. Until! She calls the Quit Line, and her friends welcome her with open arms. "Glad you made the call," her friends say.

The house owner Y had a giant entertainment center with commemorative Star Trek plates lined across the top. He said this party was very different than most other parties he'd been to, and congratulated T for being surrounded by girls. "That's how I roll," T said. Y fluttered around us, offering wine in a jokey-jokey wink-nudge-but-seriously-have-some kind of way, over and over. It was ten o'clock in the morning.

We were the party, arranged in a very tight group near the sliding glass door, holding dixie cups of water. It was weird. You had to project the appearance of having a great time, but the camera guy said you couldn't mention any "recognizable names" for copyright reasons. Whenever there was a silence we agreed to fill it with laughter. "What are you doing this weekend?" "I'm going to the beach!" And everyone laughs, like someone told a joke that no one thinks is funny. That went on for about thirty minutes, and the rest of the time we sat around on Y's velvet couch, waiting for the camera guy to be satisfied with the sound and the flowers outside the lanai and the girl's smoking abilities. I hate myself a little for participating.

April 25, 2008

I'm so scared I feel like throwing up. I forget about it and I feel fine, then I think of it and I'm scared, then I think of it again and try to convince myself I'm just excited. I think it all comes down to the fact that I'm scared they'll see me as a fake or the enemy—an infiltrator who's too naive and nose-y for her own good. Why did I say government official? Never say government.

And what the fuck am I going to say to Joaquin Phoenix? I went to your sister's store, but I think it's kinda lame and there were like 3 things for sale, which is why it won't make it to the end of the year. Oh wait, you're rich. Barf. And I need tampons. Can't forget the tampons. And everything will work out. How much can I screw up in a day and a half?

April 25, 2008

It's not even eleven o'clock at night and I am exhausted. Awoke this morning to the alarm whining in a stifling heat. Augh. I rolled over onto the man I will soon leave and hid from the day in his arms. I was suddenly sad, trying vainly to imprint the smell of him, his oblivious expression in sleep and his insufferable snores in my memory. Every morning beside him is a reminder of our end.

I finally get up and brew coffee, turn on the computer, check my e-mail and listen to some absurd NPR report on why some musicians are so forgetful. (Apparently, Yo-Yo Ma forgot his cello in a taxi cab. Well. Who cares, leave the man alone, let's not generalize some psycho-analytic reason that the source of this is their desire to escape playing altogether).

I take a shower and get dressed for work. Make some vague plans about going to a party tonight, but now (in my pj's and with a mug of hot chocolate beside me), I am clearly going nowhere.

Truthfully, I've been thinking a lot about life and etc. as graduation and the "real world" loom nearer. What do I want as a career, will I ever really be good at anything I don't truly enjoy, what is success and why do I think I want it when what I really want is passion and travel and experience and things that are fantasies (or are they)? No matter, because I am just as well BANKING on the existence and validity of these "fantasies" in every decision that I make. The future is a fantasy, it always will be. We think about something we want, something perhaps we really really want, and we make plans and often compromise those plans in order to get there. This often results in leading a "future" life nothing like the one we had been thinking about.

And yet—as much as we want to talk about living here and now, about this moment being our entire life, about laughing and forgetting altogether—these plans must still be made, responsibility must still be taken, practicality must still be acknowledged. And so here I am trying to make some plans that fall in step with what I should do instead of what I really yearn to do.

But there is a struggle in me to keep alive the senseless fantasy instead of succumbing to the dry doggy food bits of reality. I have a hope (albeit half-hearted) that the future is something I can mold into whatever I still dream and aspire it to be, instead of giving into it being a static construction already dictated off by fate or god or both.

And that tiny, whiny, childish hope is enough, really. I have to make a change. I have to move on. I'm not ready to settle, not for a lousy job, not for a boring city, not for babies, not for a

mortgage and not for him.

The future will be whatever I want it to be, even if it HAS already been written.

April 25, 2008

Today, as most days, had its ups and downs, its laughter and sorrow, its good and bad times. What we're most grateful for is the blessing that's been most thankfully bestowed on us. For we have been able to share our day Together!