

MOODY MAGAZINE

MIDNIGHT
EDITION

ISSUE III

SPRING 2023

Founded by Jennie Bull and Emma Lueders

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The signature on the left is 'Jennie Bull' written in a cursive style. The signature on the right is 'Emma Lueders' also in cursive, with a small heart symbol above the 'L'.

Moody Magazine: Midnight Edition

Spring 2023

Issue III

Dear Readers,

YAWN. I'm writing to you at 2:15am,
from my Red-Eye back home to Chicago
Scored a window seat, obviously
From where I'm at, I can see everything
~~the~~ City lights, streaming traffic,
empty football fields, quiet suburb towns
The world is simultaneously busy, talking,
laughing, driving, dancing, kissing and
sleeping, slowing, dreaming, whispering, lonely

I'm removed from it all and that's where
I'd like you to begin your journey. You're
on a Red Eye to wherever, observing
the world at night

In the Midnight Edition, I'm going to be
taking you from sunset to sunrise. Along
the way, you'll find that there's something
for everyone maybe it's staying in at 10:00pm
maybe it's the sleep paralysis demon at
3:33am maybe it's the walk of shame at 6am
whatever it is, wherever it is. Moody is for you

Gonna down this espresso shot now,

Love ya,

SOPH ♡



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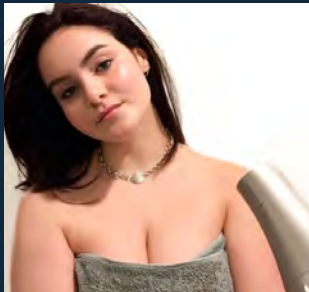
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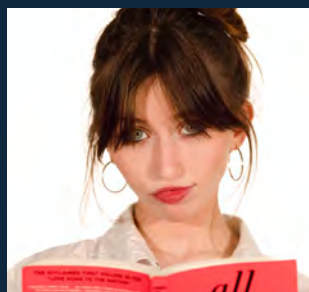
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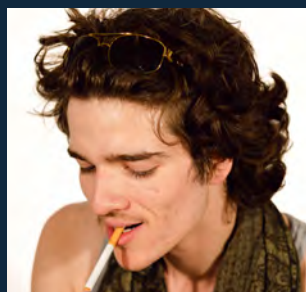
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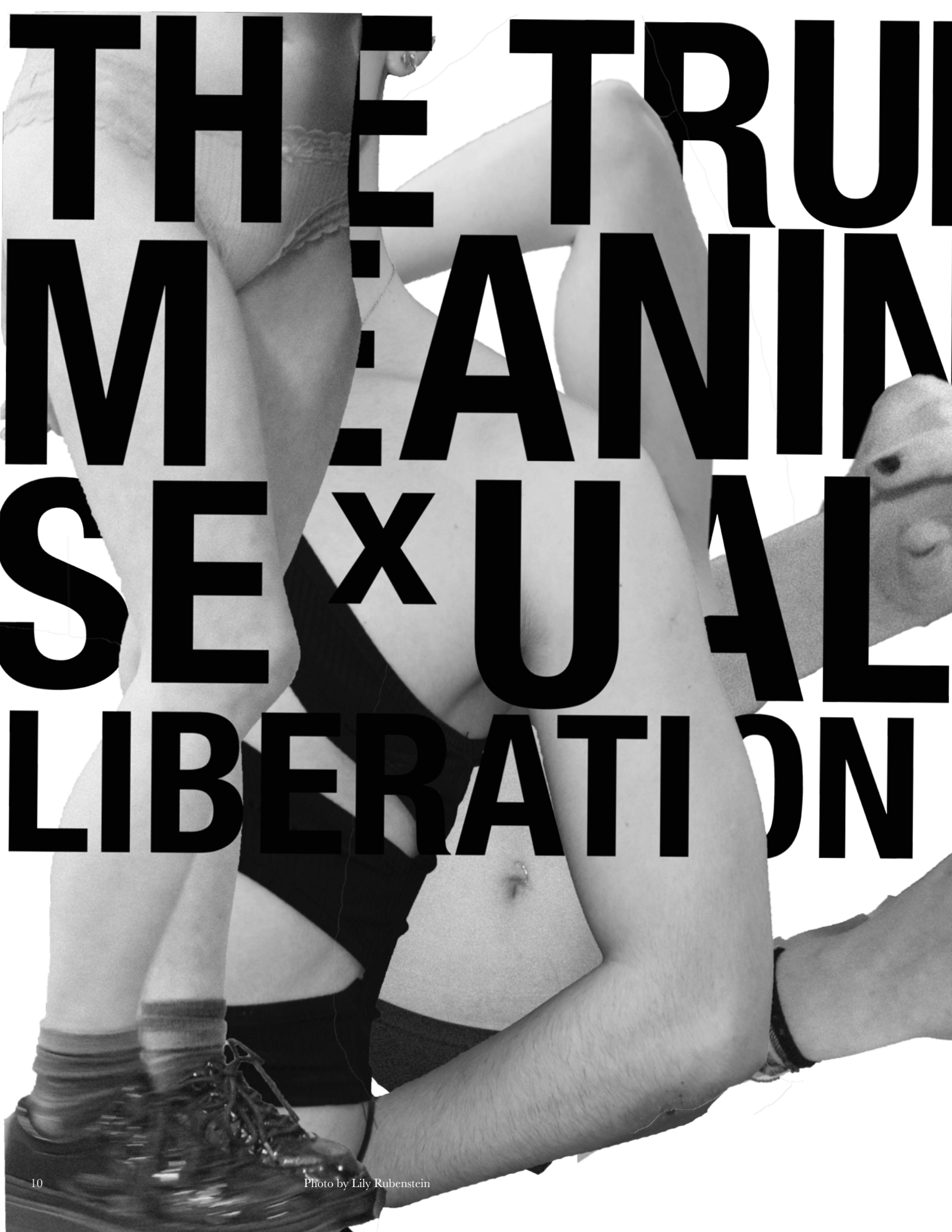


gaby einhorn
co-head of social media

not pictured :
olivia swaab (co-head of social media)
Olivia Isaacson (Publication Editor)

The sun melts onto the horizon.
Maybe you're just getting off of a god-awful
shift.
Maybe you're getting ready for a first date.
Welcome to 6PM.





THE TRU
MEANING
SEXUAL
LIBERATION

By Coco

To talk about the true meaning of sexual liberation, let's start with what it doesn't mean. Sexual liberation doesn't translate into being "experienced", it doesn't translate into "more sex", and it certainly doesn't translate into virgin-shaming. The main ingredients in Moody's definition of sexual liberation are agency, feeling empowered in one's agency, comfort, and consent. So while sexual liberation can encompass feeling dignified in having sex with the bartender you just met, it must also encompass other dimensions, like those who only want to have sex with a person they love, those who are waiting to have sex until marriage, those who do not want to have sex at all, etc.

In my experience, "sexual liberation" was, for a long time, almost a tagline I used to appeal to the male gaze without judgment. Being "sexually liberated" meant I could sit comfortably in my own socially-programmed inclination to cater myself towards men who I desired to please. While there is nothing inherently wrong with the desire to please others, my interpretation of sexual liberation meant that my agency towards sex—though I may have tricked myself into thinking it was true agency—was intrinsically tied to others' agency with me. This is where the line with consent would begin to blur; I would find myself consenting to sex that deep down, I didn't really want to have. I just wanted to be a pawn for my sexual partners for the sake of gaining approval and validation from them. That is not sexual liberation. True sexual lib-

eration is not concerned with approval or validation from others. It is about doing what you want for yourself, whether that means having consensual sex, or choosing not to.

Moody has always pushed forward a sex-positive campaign—that has been our goal from the start. But I can't help but address the fact that this campaign has, in past issues, been expressed with a sense of exclusivity. To elaborate, Moody Mag has celebrated sex in a way that has presented itself as confined to one form of sexual liberation: we made it clear we were allll about embracing the freaky, the kinky, the proud-to-be-sexual people, leaving those who are not-so-experienced to feel a lack of belonging in the very realm of sexual liberation, and in turn, a lack of belonging in the general Moody sphere.

While I am proud to be a part of a magazine that openly discusses topics on sex that have historically been deemed taboo, it is important that we strive to incorporate all facets of what sexual liberation truly entails. One does not have to experiment with bondage, ropes and sex toys to be "sexually liberated". One does not need to feel comfortable having one night stands to

be "sexually liberated." One does not need to even have sex to be "sexually liberated." The main component, as mentioned above, is feeling empowered in our decisions—any of our decisions—regarding sex, as long as these decisions prioritize consent and personal agency.

Moody wants to welcome everyone under the umbrella of sexual liberation: the hopeless romantics, the virgins who are waiting for the right person, the elite masturbators, the one night standers; the list can go on and on. Moody was made for all of us, together, and I hope every reader can find a space on its pages.

PREPPING FOR YOUR
FIRST DATE WHEN
YOU'RE NON-BINARY



liv (she/her)

i'm debating wearing a thong. i still have one. it's green. it's in the very back of my drawer. i held onto it just in case. and i fucking hate thongs. even as a woman i hated thongs. but if i wear the boxers you'll expect me to top. which. sure. i'll do. no worries. if you want my pink plastic dick you can have it. but. maybe for tonight i'll stick with the briefs. no assumptions with a pair of briefs. the binder is non-negotiable. it stays on or i stay in. i'm hoping it spares me the inevitable conversation of you won't be seeing my tits tonight. i wonder if that'll be your dealbreaker. when we first matched on tinder did you feel weird about it? about me? do you tell your friends you're going out with a girl, just to make it easier? do you tell your friends you're going out with a guy, just to make it easier? when you see me on your doorstep, wide-eyed and shivering in the snow, who do you see? this says more about me than it does about you. i'm fully aware of that. you're probably wonderful and i'll forget i ever felt this way. but i won't know and i never will know if you see me- i mean really see me -the way i see myself. and my therapist would say that if you don't, who fucking cares; but i care. i can't help but care. please be great. please be different. please get me. please be wonderful, what i need to move on. please love me or like me and or at the very least want my pink plastic dick.



sage (they/them)

i slip into my binder and trim the back of my shaggy hair without a second thought. i wonder if you clocked me right away. if you saw me the way i see me. leaning into my chair in the back of that lecture hall. i didn't clock you at first. i've been too embarrassed to admit it, but i think my head turned to glitter when you told me your pronouns. i still find the little pieces all over my bedroom floor. i'm sure it's obvious you're my first. i mean, fuck, it's syracuse, new york. who else here could have been my first? i pull on a pair of boxers and test the word partner on my tongue. i'm not yet used to it, its tartness, its juicy pulp in my mouth. i'm not yet used to boxers either. maybe for tonight i'll stick with the briefs. who will wear my pink plastic dick if we're both wearing briefs? who knows, there's no assumptions in a pair of briefs. in theory, this is easier. in theory, it's my well-worn copy of stone butch blues and my curated insta feed of t4t lesbians. and glitter. in theory it's glitter. but in practice... in practice, it's more of what i know, more of what i've always known. it's staring at my reflection in the mirror and hoping it's enough to make you like me. and my therapist would say if it's not, who fucking cares; but i care. i can't help but care.

please make this easy. please don't laugh at me. please be you. please make me realize that this is what i've needed and wanted all along. please love me or like me or at the very least wear my pink plastic dick.





Under the Table

by Rachel Okunev

A dishwasher loaded with wine-stained innuendos. The tablecloth that cannot be salvaged, stuffed into the trash among the carcass of dessert. I check the bottom of every cup as I dump out cold tea, looking for a sign which I already know isn't there.

I've always hated what comes after the party is over.

When I was younger, my Mother would always fill the space of departed guests with music. Dancing as we cleared the table, I would fall asleep on the couch before she finished with the dishes. She'd carry me upstairs, leave me to rest among mountains of stuffed toys, my blanket tucked beneath my chin.

But I am older now. Too old, in fact, to slip under the table when words go sour—to sit alongside my dog, begging for scraps of affection. My teeth are too sharp to lap them out of adults' hands without nicking their fingers, without being smacked in the nose with "Grow up."

Grow up. Stop placing your heart at the center of the table and not expecting it to be cut apart, to have the best parts picked off for eating.

Grow up. Stop sobbing your apologies into the silverware.

Dinnertime is sacred to my family. The gathering of our three generations around a table feels almost-religious—representative of both nourishing and being nourished.

It is the one ritual of theirs that survived immigration without a scratch.

But since leaving home, I've found myself not connecting as closely with these gatherings.

With every course that is served, I search for an additional way to defend this new life of mine. I am constantly poised to fight.

And when I brought my girlfriend—mostly American and so very dearly beloved—to dinner with my family, I was half-expecting to go to war for her.

I grow up.

I bring a girl home to our table.

She sits between my Father and I, and holds my heart beneath the sheet of linen, resting it upon my thigh. Always braver than I, she lights the decorative candles, unwraps the centerpiece, runs her fingers over everything I have forever been too afraid to touch.

The magic is brought back to dinnertime. Somehow, she makes shattered glass and spilled wine spell out love poems on the napkins. She spoon-feeds me laughter inside of every uncomfortable pause, after every "So, which one of you is The Guy?"

I am slack-jawed, feeling her pry open chests with the most gentle hands. If she notices the scarring—multiple generations' worth of hurt—she does not show it. No, she smiles and presses her lips to it, allows it to soften.

Seat-by-seat, I watch all heads turn toward her.

Through her eyes, I can suddenly see

the humanity tucked beneath our plates, can feel the warmth of each hand holding fork and knife. All of us glimmering beneath the candlelight.

Tension boils off the bone. She is a taste we have yet to try: something I have never realized I so intensely hungered for, not until she wraps an arm around my Brother and asks, "Can I have more wine, please?"



The moon has risen.
Dinner's over, babe. Time to get messy.
Welcome to **8:00pm**.







Nightclubs: Home of Drinks Dancing and Exploration by coco



Adulthood, maturity, being “grown up”; all things that are practically advertised to us from a young age. Because of this, many of us embark on a fast-paced race out of our own adolescence, clinging onto things that make us feel less like a kid, or moreso, things that make others perceive us as less of a kid. In other words, it is not so much the internal innocence we are readying to let go of, but others’ perception of our own innocence; specifically, the way childhood feels synonymous to being seen as inferior, to not being taken seriously, to not being respected.

The problem, however, is not founded in our rush to grow up. It is founded in the people that exploit this rush to grow up.

Think of the promoters at clubs in big cities like NYC and LA, permitting girls as young as sixteen years old to enter a space in which they are clearly not ready for; a

place where predators prowl from corner to corner, where roofies are as commonplace as other party drugs, where these girls will come across their first experiences of overt objectification and sometimes, worse.

But it is because these promoters do not care about the safety of these girls, nor the preservation of these girls’ innocence. They care about the benefits they reap from these sorts of exchanges: I—a thirty five year old bum—will ignore how obvious it is that your I.D. is fake, if you—a pretty, juvenile girl—enter a space in which men can look at you, dance next to you, look at you even more, get you drunk, and potentially take you home. It’s like product placement: these young girls are a commodity while placed in these nightclubs, and their yearning for maturity is what’s exploited.

Thus, these girls—some who have

not even gotten their driver’s license yet—are thrown into a sphere in which they are no longer treated like a “kid,” which is something they’ve been etching away from since the first signs of change in their prepubescent bodies. They get to paint their face with makeup, and in this, paint a persona of someone they’ve ached to be regarded as: the “mature woman”; the woman with red lips and black heels, the woman that adult men swoon at, the woman that adults, in general, finally take seriously.

And so, in environments like 21+ nightclubs, these children feel shreds of the “maturity” they’ve long been chasing; they feel like people respect them as something more than just a “kid.” But this exploitation of youthful, hungry naiveté, though it feels like an early form of respect, is anything but.

After all, clubs are for fun. Not for sixteen year olds.

The mirror holds no secrets, though the person on the other side seems to know something you don't. You wonder who she'll be tonight.
One of the incandescent bulbs above your bathroom sink died a couple years back, the other flickers if you slam the door too hard.
It casts a harsh shadow across your face, reminiscent of the crescent moon nestled within the powerlines, shining bright and full over the fence, under the plum boughs. She enchants those who dare to dance in her shadows.

You overline your eyes, chasing an ever unattainable symmetry— good enough.
You pop ibuprofen like it's candy, swigging it down with vanilla spice rum, the taste of orange gatorade still lingering from its small plastic bottle.
Here begins the search for something stronger.

Sixteen. Overlined eyes. Fast fashion miniskirts and chunky boots that thunder when you walk.
You pray each step doesn't break you.

At eleven thirty-two, at seventy-two miles an hour, staring out the sunroof, you caught her winking through the pines.
She bleeds silver into the night, her darkness is your shield.

You sit in the back seat, memorizing the information on the plastic ID.
You decide who you're going to be for the night— who this 22 year old from Ohio is.
You invent her.
She has no fears— she gets what she wants. You let her take over.
The bouncer scoffs, but pretty girls always get in.

You have learned that meekness and softness give off a stench of fear so pervasive that every predator within a mile sharpens his ravenous teeth.
Your femininity is a weapon— your youth an object of their desires.
They want a woman with baby fat— not quite a woman— but close enough.
They know you're underage, but don't acknowledge it.

Plausible deniability.

They grip your leg, slide their hands up your thighs
You use them— let them get handsy
Don't bite the hand that pours liquor down your throat

You tilt my head upwards as the drunk girl in the club bathroom reapplies the lipgloss she took off of you only moments ago.
You can still taste what she was drinking.
It feels like looking towards god, a drunken haze over your eyes.
As she laughs, smearing the product on your lips

The bathroom of the club is lined with girls like you
All roped into the same situation
You use the same promoters
Sold on the idea of being desirable— that your worth is attached to your sex appeal

Under the moonlight— where souls are most intertwined.
In the dark, where lies are most disguised.
In the cold, where even the leaves start to crumble.
You are afraid of who you'll be when you step out of her darkness

Painting with Cheeks Voila

New York City—home of Lady Liberty, the bustling city scene, and famously known as the capital of drag. It's safe to say that the distinct characters and cultures that thrive here are what makes the city the quintessential melting pot of the world. One individual encapsulates all that makes this place the city of dreams—Meet Cheeks Voila (@cheeksvoila on Instagram), an NYC based drag queen, who places emphasis on magnifying features instead of transforming them.

Sophia Lucina and Vivian Li of Moody Magazine sat down with Cheeks to take a closer look on how she takes on the dynamic scenes of New York City. Here's what we uncovered.

MOODY: Welcome, Cheeks! Thanks for getting in the mood with us.


Cheeks: Not a problem—happy to be here!

So, let's start from the beginning. How did you get into fashion and makeup to begin with?

I was like 7 to 10 years old and obsessed with Polly Pockets. I felt like they represented a little version of me, in a way. Granted, I didn't recognize the fact that I wasn't a white woman with blond, bombshell hair and made out of silicone. But... little did I know.

Adorable. Have you always been comfortable with this side of yourself?

I remember being 14, scrolling on Logo on DIRECTV. Drag race was playing,



and it was my first time seeing these people dressed that way. I immediately clicked the channel off, and I was like, shattered. I was like, “I don’t know what these things are... I don’t know who these people think they are, but that’s not me.”

And why do you think you were so scared?

Looking back to myself at that young age, I just wasn’t ready to confront who I am today. It’s interesting for me to find something – that was once derived from xenophobic fear –to eventually find comfort in these figures.

How do you feel that the Drag community, and fashion overall has allowed you to access that part of yourself?

Fashion helped me access an emerging ‘trans-ness’ that wasn’t fostered yet, however, despite my confusion, I’ve recognized that fashion and drag have always been a part of me since my adolescence.

What would you consider your favorite part of the night?

My favorite part is performing. Interacting with the crowd. I believe in the power of audience interaction– While I’m performing, I tend to block everything else out, since all I’m focused on is my art. I’m not just doing choreography, I’m inside the choreography- responding to the crowds’ energy. I feel very strongly that people are portals. In this conversation that you and I have been having, I’ve been transported to a place where only the two of us are right now. And perhaps some electricity and some technology is facilitating that. But there is the uniqueness of the very moment that a person is existing in.

Moody Magazine is all about expressing yourself without limits while celebrating inclusivity and authenticity — How would you define self expression?

When I came out as trans a few years ago, I began exploring my feminine side by wearing corsets and high heels. It was upon my realization that I was never really trying to make myself look feminine, I was trying to create a physical embodiment of this entity that lives inside my physical body.

Wow that was truly thought provoking—I have a final question for you. What do you want to tell others who are afraid to be themselves or like leave a message to the Moody community about individuality?

To those people who are struggling with self identity, I’ll tell you right now it doesn’t get easier, especially in an age of social media. In this digital age, it may seem like the world knows you, but they don’t–no one does. Moreover, although everyone is completely unique, it’s not always possible to express yourself as I’ve experienced—even in New York City, the “queer capital” of the United States, or perhaps the world, y’know.

However, there’s something special in finding ways to express your identity, tying into self-love. I recently came across works by Yumi Sakugawa, a Japanese writer, that recounts this idea of we are portals. A portal is individualized and unique, pulling from very specific energy to transport people to another place. That is so powerful to me. And I would say just lean into that, lean into the presentness of your unique character. You will never be the same ever again, ever.

That was so powerful, Cheeks. I’m so excited for this interview and to share with everyone. Seriously, so impactful.

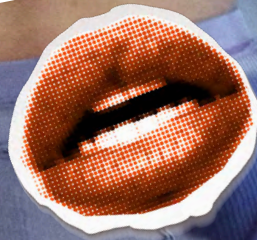




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the girls are cuddling

By Jordy
Pulsbury

I used to love sleepovers - the crappy horror movies, pillowfights, pizza and prank calls, whispering secrets under the covers. But somewhere between there and now, the games turned to gossip...the secrets to confessions. And I began hating sleepovers.

Maybe it was the way being “girly” never felt natural to me. I was made to be less of a girl—some boy/girl mutt—so I desperately chased the approval and friendship of other girls my age. I’d know I was doing something right when a girl would hold my hand only to walk a few steps, when she’d ask for lipgloss, pull me closer for a picture, ask where my top was from. Sleepovers felt like the ultimate test of how well I could fit in with other girls. Did they deem me “one of them”? Did they deem me “girly”? ...Straight?

I still remember the panic I’d get walking through the front door, immediately being bombarded by hugs and excited squeals, then hastily herded to some distant bedroom. The familiar sounds of girlish laughter and smell of glittery nail polish (that somehow always reminded me of bananas) were permanently carved into my brain. My anxiety manifested like a piece of shrapnel lodged into my stomach; simple activities that once were sleepover essentials now felt like I was navigating a minefield.

I’d hesitantly sit on the edge of the bed, feeling so deeply out of place and uncomfortable within my own skin. I’d feel the need to avert my eyes when they’d change into their pj’s, and would use my period as an excuse to go to the bathroom to change into my own. I was especially uncomfortable with their touch. Even in its most gentle forms— braiding each other’s hair, holding hands during scary movies, even hugs— I’d avoid at all cost. I was so afraid my platonic affection would be twisted, that once they knew my sexuality, they’d look back on all of these moments and feel that I took advantage of their oblivion.

They’d kiss each other and say it doesn’t count if it’s a girl. It’s just practice for the real thing. But it didn’t feel like practice to me. Or when I’d be pinned to the bed with her hips, her hand delicately wrapped around my jaw, holding my face still as she painted my eyelid with some shade of blue I picked out (which, apparently, was a bad choice). My makeovers were a sleepover staple; my discomfort was their entertainment. I was their dancing jester. The mutt with makeup.

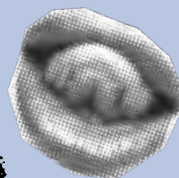
Mom, come pick me up. I’d recite in a text. And as always, she’d pull up around ten minutes later.

I used to love sleepovers, until my own anxieties and internalized homophobia began to poison every innocent interaction I could’ve had. I was told to be ashamed of who I was, and I let those ignorant voices dictate how I felt about myself. I witnessed others who proudly claimed their identities get ostracized, and deeply feared that isolation.

After coming out, all of my sleepover-invites appeared to get lost in the mail. While it felt like the end of the world at the time, I wish I could tell myself to remove the pedestal I placed others’ approval on. I now realize

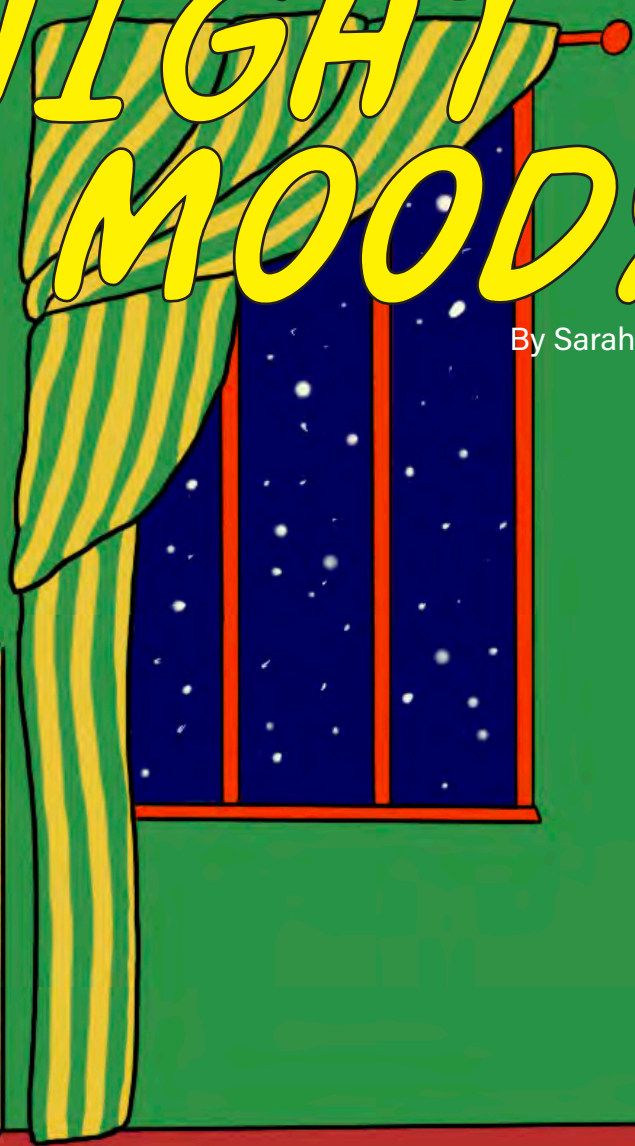
that their friendship was no loss compared to a lifetime of pride and comfort within myself and my identity. No words or opinions could ever affect the pride and confidence I feel within myself. Those who didn’t stick around never deserved to be there in the first place.

This mutt now bares her teeth.



GOODNIGHT MOODY

By Sarah Dickerson





From my twin sized bed, I look out at my space
On the floor, a crotchless thong
Perimetered in lace
On the desk, a dirty bong
A shot glass and a chase

And two gallons of lube
By just a single sticky boob

And my prescribed SSRIs
Right by those clear drops for my eyes

And a pile of tissues
From the cries of "I miss you"

Oh, goodnight dearest room
Goodnight my dread, impending doom

Goodnight mood stabilizers
Goodnight horse tranquilizers

Goodnight melatonin I won't take
Goodnight migraine when I wake

Goodnight to the
"Am I still blocked?" text
From my second
Favorite ex

Goodnight stuffed animal
That I have held since I was three
Sleep well sexiest readers
Goodnight, Moody

Going Out: The Mask, The Insecurity



Why do we go out?

There are obvious external forces at play. Certain expectations and aesthetics. Alcohol and partying constantly splashed over the media we consume, normalization of young-adult part culture, the recent revival of something the kids are calling ‘indie sleaze’ — where having glossy, intoxicated eyes and smudged makeup is cool.

But there’s some whole-some reasons we choose to wake up with headaches and day-old makeup on our faces. It might be to make pre-gaming with people you actually want to see; taking photos on an old camera that you’ll show your kids in a college scrapbook one day. It might simply be about showing face; trying a new eye-shadow shade, a skirt length, a different succession of houses. Maybe the liminality of it all reminds you that you’re still young, willing, and alive. The lights in basements, the flicker of the upstairs hallways, the way your ears ring when you whip out of another side door into the freezing air.

But the liquor doesn’t always cause you to look at all the aspects of a night out with awe and pre-nostalgia; the sticky floors, the ears ringing, the freezing air. The liquor doesn’t taste like absent-minded courage and confidence, because you’re too caught up in focusing on the lingering blue lights that shine from across the room.

That’s because you know how big your nose looks when you’re standing in front of blue lights; something that your ex-boyfriend from high school told you when they purchased mood-setting LEDs for their bedroom. This is causing a constant, magnetic force of eyes being laid on you at all times. That guy that made eye contact with you in passing last Thursday is now holding a deep gaze

into your soul. It must be the blue lights.

Maybe you resort to a perpetual stance behind your taller friend; a move which slowly shifts into you being the focal point of a triangular barricade of four bodies. It’s unintentional, as it always is, but you’re enjoying it this way. No one gets to catch you in a moment where your lips aren’t pouted, a second where you’re not sucked in,



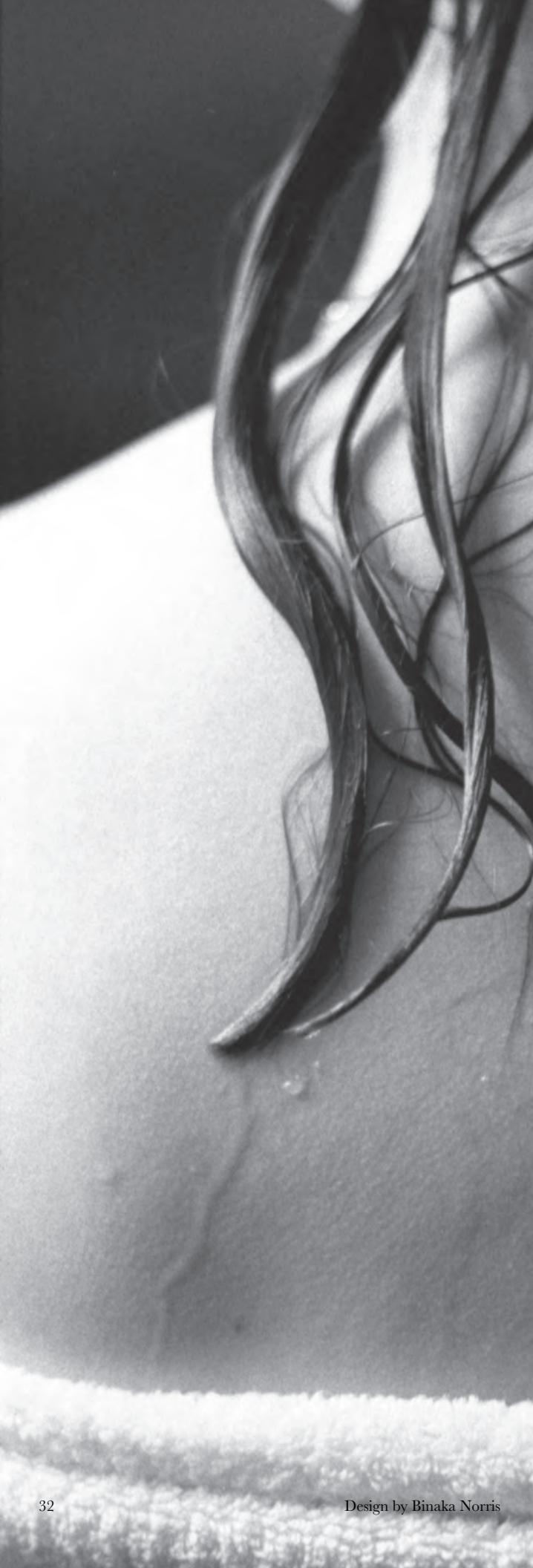
a minute where your 'good side' isn't on a platform, being presented to the entire room for occupants to view, critique, and maybe pick.

You've observed how many bold texts and attention-seeking displays have manifested into exciting adventures for your friends, all underpinned by alcohol. So, you have another drink to put your thoughts on the lighting and the too-familiar faces you're seeing on hold.

After the next song, though, it only comes back three times stronger. Soon you feel the eyes of every strong-jawed magnet pulling you. The lights blue, you can't stop thinking about your face, and now your exposed shoulders. You're uncontrollably drawn to show it off. Your body wants all of it; the attention, the attention from tall heads peering in the crowd, the attention to your unapolo-

getic nose and your wide back profile. But your brain can't let you have it. And before those thoughts consume you into expression of this recurring phenomenon, you're being pulled out by your barricade into another vortex of freezing air.

Onto the next... the next basement, the next hallway, the next sea of stares and insecurities. We go out for fun, but for some it's impossible not to get caught up.



Is Staying In the New Going Out?

By Nate LeBoeuf

"I don't know if I'm feeling it tonight," you say to your friends over a dreaded FaceTime call. It's a cruel Saturday night, and the cold outside has stripped you of all enthusiasm for the anticipated bar crawl. You wish you felt up for it and wonder what your friends are up to as you seclude yourself indoors.

While they pour the shots two blocks down, you light your candles and switch on the fairy lights. Their black tops attach to their ribs like magnets, and you know they're comically tighter than the silk PJs you just slipped into. Worst of all, it dawns on you that as your 11th Pitch Perfect rewatch reaches its climax (the Bellas are going absolutely feral on that stage), they will all be bringing their lovers back to their collective rooms- the fun has only begun for them.

Nevertheless, your night is just as fuzzy as theirs. You ate your comfort meal, finally called your mom back, had a dance party for one, and maybe if you felt naughty- ordered the expensive necklace that's been in your online cart for weeks. You may not have been drunk with friends, but your party was loads more fun than any frat could offer.

Your FOMO doesn't come close to how much your mind has felt like a shitstorm lately. You finally had a night without substances; you finally let your brain relax. But there's still that inkling in the back of your head—should you feel bad for missing a night out?

There's passion and zest to a night in, but college party culture does anything to take that away from young people. There are opportunities for blackouts every weekend, and parties come in a feast of plenty. It's a tricky line to toe- how does one avoid being antisocial and preserve their physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being? There's also the looming dread of feeling displaced from friends if you, God forbid, decide not to go out on a Thursday night. Will you miss out on the best night of the semester or meeting someone sexy? Will people feel like you don't value them as friends if you aren't stumbling home with them at least 3 nights a week?

There is a blissful sensuality to staying in at night, but our fear of exclusion prevents us from doing so. A crucial first step is reminding yourself that nobody will hate you for barring yourself in your room, as long as proper communication is still there. Assuage that FOMO by spending quality time with your friends elsewhere: join your roomies in the morning after debriefing on the living room couch, get lunch with them the next afternoon and discover what you missed. Nobody should feel bad for choosing between face masks and frats.

Protecting your peace does not equate to ghosting the people you love. So take a night to yourself, and give yourself the love you need. The dance floor will be waiting for you next weekend.





Choose Your Character: Womanhood in the World of Online Gaming

By Caroline Nolan



His large frame takes up the vast majority of the screen. Pulsating muscles peek out from beneath his luminous armor as he lets out several intimidating groans. He has one of those excessively macho names, the kind that only exists in Westerns and porn. Ten knives swing from his belt, two swords rest upon his back, and a hefty machine gun sits in his hands. He exudes the confidence of a true warrior. And her? She looks hot. Her animatedly bouncing breasts seep out of her itty-bitsy latex bikini top. Soft-skinned and siren-eyed, she spins to reveal the way her denim shorts accentuate her already exaggerated curves. She stares seductively through the screen as she toys with her long, glossy hair. He is prepared for victory – and she is unbelievably sexy.

This is the standard when it comes to video game character selection screens, which almost always blatantly sexualize female characters. This doesn't really come as a surprise though, does it? Women have always been written off as solely emotional beings, while men have been praised for their wisdom and rationality. Since technology falls into this second, more concrete category, the industry has grown to be one-sided and a disproportionate number of men have held a stake. At their conception, video games were made by men, who only thought to cater to one demographic – themselves. According to recent research, one in three male gamers prefer playing with female characters. The study suggests that this is be-

cause (a) “playing female characters (typically designed for the male gaze) is another way for men to objectify and control women’s bodies,” and (b) “female avatars are psychologically perceived to be weaker and less skilled and this can give a player a psychological edge against opponents.” Considering that the target demographic for video games thrives off of their presence, how could video games not perpetuate misogynistic belief systems?

Needless to say, video games are a boys club. When women wish to participate, they are shamed, teased, and sexualized. I remember watching my brothers play online games when I was younger and feeling jealous at the connections they’d make with their online friends. When I played online, men were one of two things – angry or horny. Dude, we got a girl on our team. Hey, sexy, you got an Instagram? I could literally jerk off to her voice. Bruh, she just died. We lost. ARE YOU FUCKING SERIOUS, SLUT? Get back in the kitchen. I was only 13. Even as I grew older, I noticed that my own guy friends saw my innocent hobby as part of my sex appeal. If you did gaming live streams you could get so rich – as long as you pull your tits out. Other times, they’d simply exclude me. Nah, you can’t play. It’s a boy’s thing. It seems like men feel as though they have the right to make these comments. The games were made for them, not me, anyway.



Women, like myself, can’t change the way that we are treated in the gaming space, at least not instantaneously. But, we can recognize the insecurity that fuels these behaviors. One study found that literal losers are more likely to harass women in-game. In this study, men who did not perform well in the game made unnecessary, hostile, and sexist remarks toward the women in the game. The men who won their games were, for the most part, quite kind to the female players. According to the researchers, “as men often rely on aggression to maintain their dominant social status, the increase in hostility towards a woman by lower-status males may be an attempt to disregard a female’s performance.” For now, we can find peace in knowing that beta males are the primary perpetrators of sexism in gaming. However, as more women make their debut in the tech space, it leaves us hopeful that soon we will be able to choose our own characters.



Written
By:

*Sarah
Griffiths*

Reflection

I lift a glass of red wine to my lips, savoring the rich flavor. I shiver as I hold the cold glass to my chest, feeling it move with my shallow breaths.

Staring into the bathroom mirror, my gaze traces the dark circles decorating my eyeliner-smudged eyes. My blue eyes trail down the white shirt hanging off my shoulder to the lace trim underwear I have had for way too long. My purple stained lips are pursed in a permanent frown. I stay there until my glass is empty, studying my features to confirm my presence in the real world.

They say you can't see your reflection in a dream. That in place of yourself is just empty darkness. Unfortunately, I dream a lot, and not all of them are pleasant—so I find myself more in front of a mirror than not, rooting myself into reality.

After a thorough inspection of my face, I slip back into bed. I assure the knife tucked away between my mattress and bedframe is still

in place, my peace of mind soothed with its presence. The burn of the wine and my thick com

forter aid in warming me as I lose the battle to stay awake. My eyelids start to feel heavier until I finally succumb to sleep.

I am startled awake by the burn of someone's eyes on me. Sitting up, I scan the room for an intruder, only to be met with the contents of my messy room.

Running a hand down my face I breathe in big gulps of air, clutching the comforter with a white knuckled grip. I eye the half empty bottle of wine on my dresser, longing for a relief from my dry throat. Sighing, I rub my temples and turn to the 3:27am etched on my alarm clock, emitting a soft red light. The fluttering of my window curtains draws my attention, walking over I trail my hands down the silky fabric.

I stare out the window, gazing at the stars blanketed by darkness and the trees being rocked to sleep by the wind. My mouth drops in horror as my eyes hone in on a figure in the distance.

No. Not again.

Clad in black, their looming presence is like plague to the surrounding bush.

My knees buckle, and my heart begins to race. Scrambling into my bathroom I slam the door, tucking my knees against my chest as a guttural gasp is released from my body. I hold my hands to my heart as if my fingers are the only thing stopping the organ from jumping out of me.

The knife.

Standing on shaky legs I ready myself to grab the knife tucked away between my mattress and bedframe.

Reaching for the door knob I freeze at the terrible sight staring back at me in the mirror. Black holes replace where my familiar blue eyes once resided. Tendrils flare out on my cheek, as if my blood was no longer crimson. Clawing at my face in horror, black liquid pours out of the scratches left in my attempt to rid the monstrous view of myself.



mare, my eyes close on their own accord and I am once again at the mercy of my subconscious.

And the nightmare only seems to pick up more intensely. Hands roughly grab my shoulders. A piercing cry is emitted from deep within me. Kicking out with my feet, I hear a satisfying grunt released from my attacker as they fall to the floor.

Digging around for the knife next to me, I hiss in pain as the sharp blade knicks my finger. Blood coats my hand causing the blade to slip out of my grasp. Then my attacker grabs both my legs, dragging me to the ground and pinning me under their body. My hands flare around, frantically searching for the knife. A wave of my adrenaline pumps through me as I finally feel the cold metal against my skin.

Grasping the handle of the knife I rear back and stab it into the side of my attacker. I scramble out from under them as their weight begins to crush me, pulling the knife out as I go.

Finally, I slayed the monster that has terrorized me for months, the reason for my nightmares. With shaking hands, I stare at the blood streaked knife. And that's when I see it, the biggest nightmare of it all:

My stained lips frowning. My blue eyes staring back at me.

My reflection.

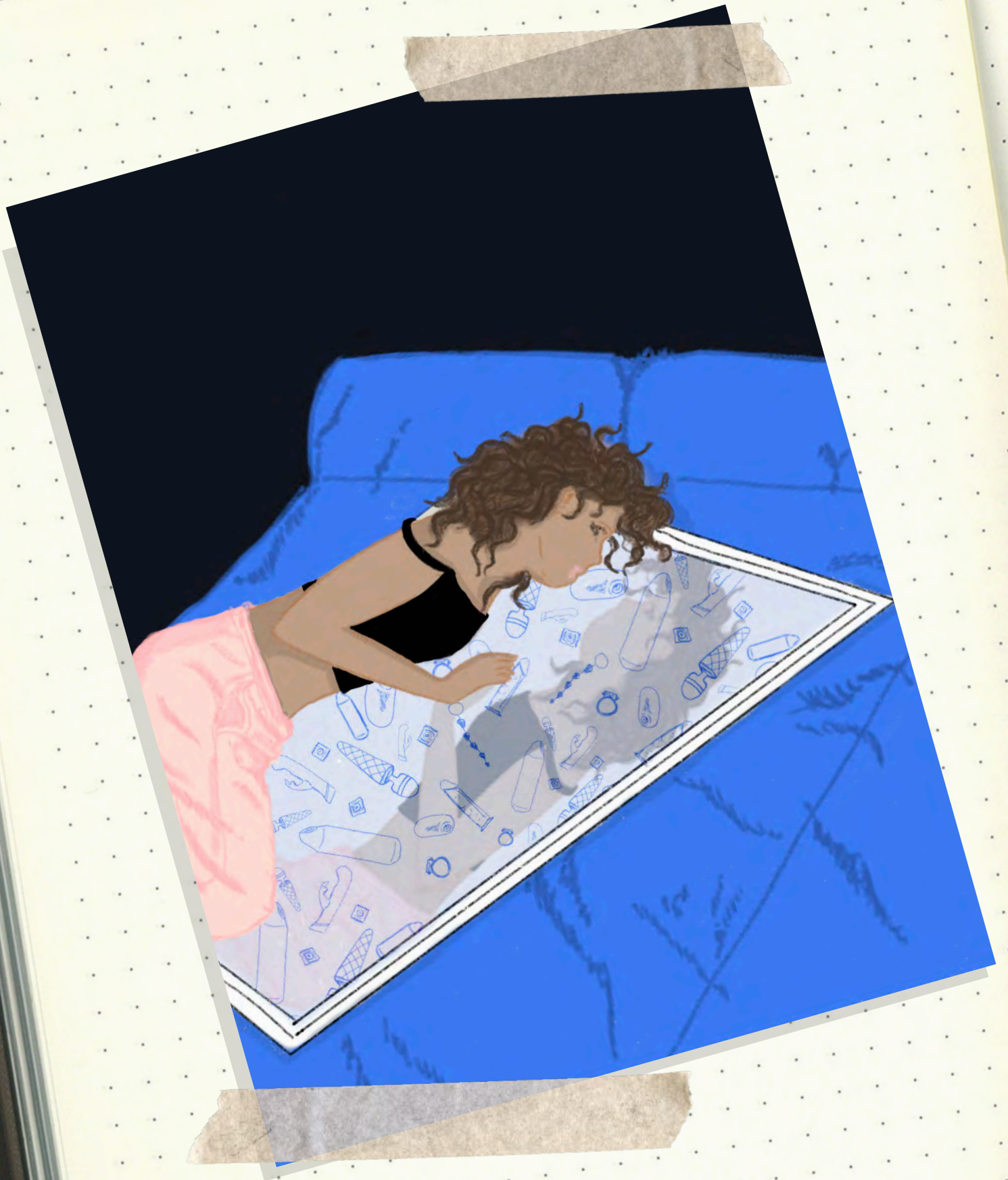
And suddenly I'm awake again; throwing off the covers and running to the bathroom mirror, sighing in relief at the sight of my own face. It was just a dream. It was just a dream.

The alarm clock reads 3:30am. I've been having these kinds of dreams for months now. Maybe it's my subconscious telling me there is something I need to overcome before I can truly be myself..... Or maybe im just fucking crazy.

Sitting at the end of my bed, I rake my fingers through my knotty hair. Forgoing a glass, I grab the bottle of wine and take a greedy gulp. Then I lay back on the bed and wipe the sweat off my forehead. The inadequate amount of sleep I have gotten these past few months has destroyed any sense of sanity I had. This has to end.

Despite the horrors of my night





Am I Lonely or Am I Independent?

By Noelle Johnson

It's been twenty minutes since I stumbled back into my room, I lay in bed naked, makeup half-removed, clothes strewn around my floor. I'm staring at the ceiling, rolling the bullet vibe I've had since my eighteenth birthday back and forth in my palm. This wasn't the plan. I didn't think I'd end the night alone.

The starched white sheet skims over my nipples and bare stomach. Stubble pricks the pads of my fingertips as I graze them over the soft flesh of my inner thighs. I think about the girl from tonight. I think about the girl from a month ago. I think about the girl from a year ago. I think about the girl from last summer. I think about my ex. I imagine them all in the room with me. I turn the vibrator on.

I make concentric circles. The rhythm starts slow. I imagine the familiar taste of slick and sour on my tongue. Breath on my neck. A hand on my shoulder. Dancing tonight, sweaty, bubbly, free. My breath hitches. I think about watching her kiss him. Watching her leave. No. Not right now. I steady my hand.

The rhythm moves quicker. I don't know what to think about. I can't think about her or her or her. I can't think about the past. I can't think about the person I wish I was or the person I wish I was with. I can't think about hands. Or lips. Or cheeks. Or eyes. Or shoulders. Or thighs. Even faster now. I can't think. I don't think. Hey. Stop thinking. I wonder if I'll ever figure it out, if I'll ever bring someone home again. Even closer now. Keep going. Keep pushing. I'll fuck myself til the bad thoughts disappear.

And just as I'm on the brink of the edge, I mean, right there right there, my pinky brushes the side of my leg. My skin on my skin. And I remember whose hand is making me feel like this. It passes over me like the tide in early morning. A gentle crash on smooth, pale sand. Water blue, so blue, against a pinkening sky. I'm left panting and clear. I stare back at the ceiling and I smile.

God Fucking Damn.

Nobody does me like me.

The demon hour.
That's just a shadow...right?
Welcome to **3:33am**.



Photo by Jah Levy



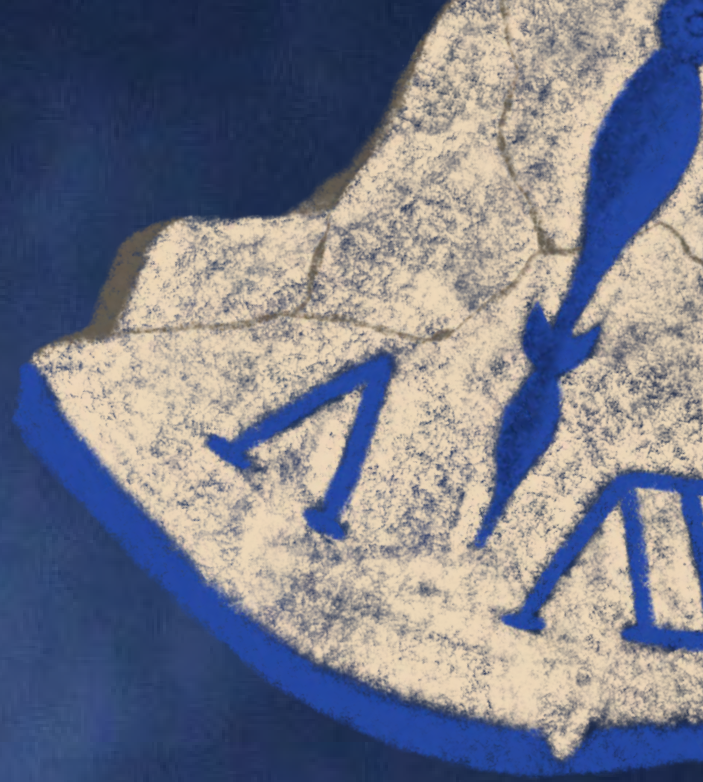
Por Camilla Sanchez

Muchas veces es el presente que me hace confiar
En aquello que no se encuentra tan lejos
Que incluso decide llevarme de la mano
Con miedo de dejarme atrás.

Es entonces con aquella prisa que me confundo
La cual da fin a los sueños
Y a las prontas ideologías
Queriendo solamente acoger lo que viene en camino.

Aun así a pesar de la costumbre
La seguridad siempre logra esconderse
Quitándole lo similar a cualquier sentimiento
Convirtiéndolo igual de desconocido que el destino.

Y así es que mi mano se va soltando
Pues la ayuda solo existe para cruzar el puente invisible
Aquel no tan lejos con el paso del tiempo
Como las ganas de llegar a familiarizarme con lo nuevo.



Many times it's the present that makes me trust
In what is not so far away
Even deciding to take me by the hand
With the fear of leaving me behind

It is then with that rush that I get confused
Which puts an end to dreams
And to the quick ideologies
Only wanting to greet what's on its way

But despite the habit
Confidence always manages to hide itself
Taking away the similarity of any feeling
Making it just as unknown as fate

And that's how my hand starts to let go
Because help only exists to cross the invisible bridge
The one not so far with the passing of time
Just as the desire to become familiar with the new.

By Camilla Sanchez

8351

MOODY'S ANONYMOUS SEX POLL

NAME _____ DATE _____
ADDRESS _____

SOLD BY CASH C.O.D. CHARGE ON ACCT. MDSE. PAID OUT
RET.D.

QUAN.	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	AMOUNT
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i fucked my
boyfriend's 20-year
old brother 2 weeks
after we broke up

CUSTOMER'S ORDER NO. _____ REC'D BY _____

KEEP THIS SLIP FOR REFERENCE

8351

MOODY'S ANONYMOUS SEX POLL

NAME _____ DATE _____
ADDRESS _____

SOLD BY CASH C.O.D. CHARGE ON ACCT. MDSE. PAID OUT
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QUAN.	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	AMOUNT
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one time i told a
guy i was a virgin
to feed into purity
culture - am i fucked up?

CUSTOMER'S ORDER NO. _____ REC'D BY _____

KEEP THIS SLIP FOR REFERENCE

8351

MOODY'S ANONYMOUS SEX POLL

NAME _____ DATE _____
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SOLD BY CASH C.O.D. CHARGE ON ACCT. MDSE. PAID OUT
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QUAN.	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	AMOUNT
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I got drunk the other
night and i swear
i could have kissed
my bro... fuck

CUSTOMER'S ORDER NO. _____ REC'D BY _____

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MOODY'S ANONYMOUS SEX POLL

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Yes okay cheating
sucks, but we are
still young and i
get a rush from it...
does that make me
a bad person?

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QUAN.	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	AMOUNT
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Sometimes i like to
fuck guys who are
a little bit uglier
than me so i feel
like i'm doing them
a favor

CUSTOMER'S ORDER NO. _____ REC'D BY _____

KEEP THIS SLIP FOR REFERENCE

8351

MOODY'S ANONYMOUS SEX POLL

NAME _____ DATE _____
ADDRESS _____

SOLD BY CASH C.O.D. CHARGE ON ACCT. MDSE. PAID OUT
RET.D.

QUAN.	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	AMOUNT
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i want to get railed
by my married
college professor

CUSTOMER'S ORDER NO. _____ REC'D BY _____

KEEP THIS SLIP FOR REFERENCE

8351

MOODY'S ANONYMOUS SEX POLL

NAME _____ DATE _____
 ADDRESS _____

QUAN.	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	AMOUNT
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I'd love to fuck
my clone

CUSTOMER'S ORDER NO. _____ REC'D BY _____

KEEP THIS SLIP FOR REFERENCE

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MOODY'S ANONYMOUS SEX POLL

NAME _____ DATE _____
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QUAN.	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	AMOUNT
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I'm literally
asexual but i write
hardcore smut
fantfiction on a03
↳ it's a lifestyle

CUSTOMER'S ORDER NO. _____ REC'D BY _____

KEEP THIS SLIP FOR REFERENCE

8351

MOODY'S ANONYMOUS SEX POLL

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I want my partner
to watch me use
a toy on myself.

CUSTOMER'S ORDER NO. _____ REC'D BY _____

KEEP THIS SLIP FOR REFERENCE

8351

MOODY'S ANONYMOUS SEX POLL

NAME _____ DATE _____
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QUAN.	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	AMOUNT
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I have a huge
thing for authority
and i have elaborate
fantasies where
i seduce my boss.

CUSTOMER'S ORDER NO. _____ REC'D BY _____

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MOODY'S ANONYMOUS SEX POLL

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 ADDRESS _____

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I'm a virgin but
i don't think i want
to have sex. it
makes me feel bad
that i don't sometimes

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MOODY'S ANONYMOUS SEX POLL

NAME _____ DATE _____
 ADDRESS _____

QUAN.	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	AMOUNT
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I'm bi but i
could never
come out since
i'm in a frat.

CUSTOMER'S ORDER NO. _____ REC'D BY _____

KEEP THIS SLIP FOR REFERENCE



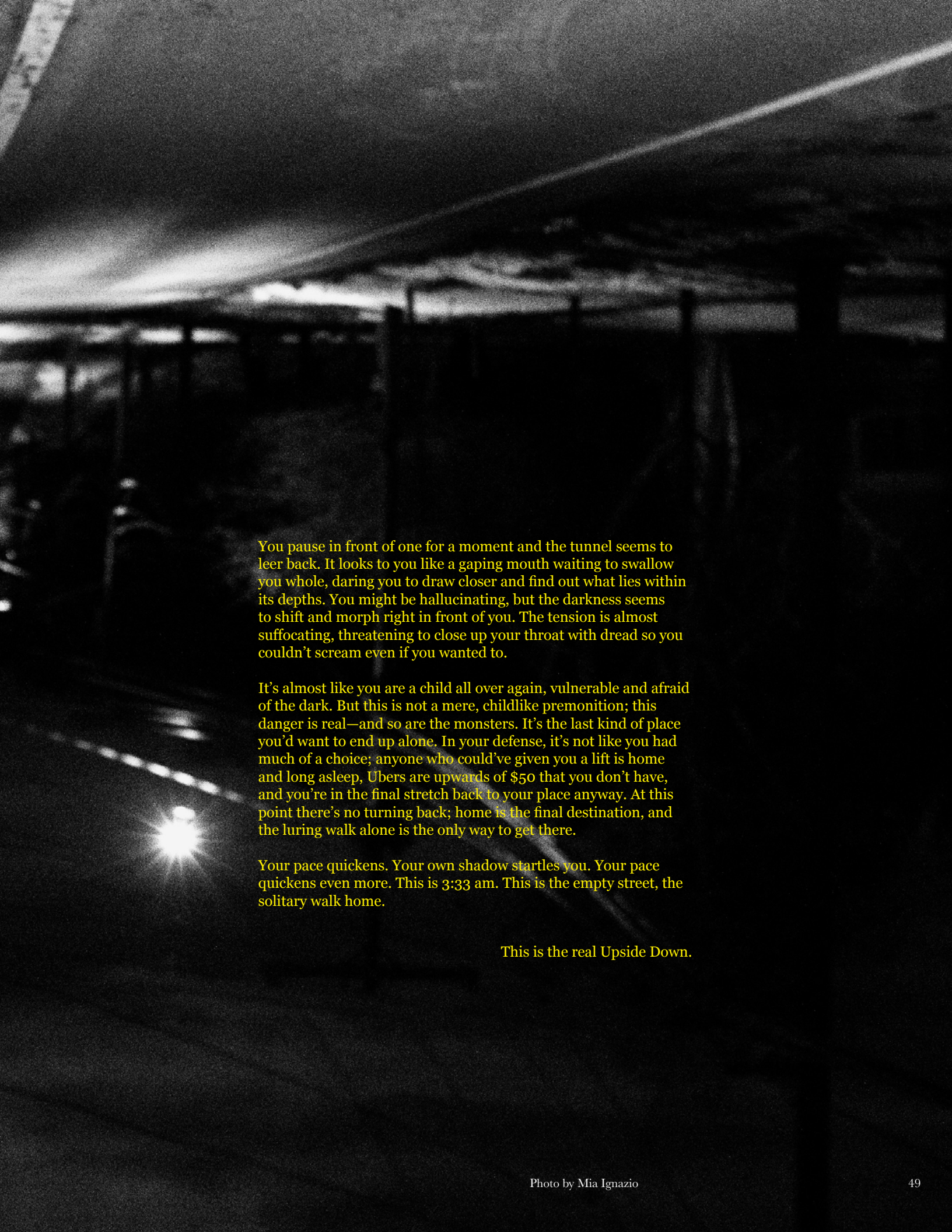
The Upside Down

By Vanessa Walker

3:33 am. An empty street. A solitary walk home. An entrance into the real Upside Down.

These are the sights that greet you everyday; colorful flowers in front of the shops, vibrant murals painted on the buildings, welcome signs that smile and invite you to come in and rest for a bit. But it's all different now. In the absence of daylight or human presence, it feels like a desolate alternate reality, one that cruelly mimics a once lively place. Locked doors and darkened windows force you to accept that you're truly on your own. There's no one to rely on for consolation but yourself.

This surrounding silence is only broken by your footsteps, which sound like thundering echoes exposing your location to any monsters that may be prowling about. You're tempted to fumble for your headphones and drown it all out with your favorite song, but you know better than to let your guard down. Your best bet is to stay under some light. All you have are sparsely situated streetlamps, flickering with an eerie, yellowed glow that almost makes the surrounding alleys look even darker. You glance down each narrow tunnel as you pass it by, keeping close watch so that no prowling creature can catch you off your guard and snatch you away.



You pause in front of one for a moment and the tunnel seems to leer back. It looks to you like a gaping mouth waiting to swallow you whole, daring you to draw closer and find out what lies within its depths. You might be hallucinating, but the darkness seems to shift and morph right in front of you. The tension is almost suffocating, threatening to close up your throat with dread so you couldn't scream even if you wanted to.

It's almost like you are a child all over again, vulnerable and afraid of the dark. But this is not a mere, childlike premonition; this danger is real—and so are the monsters. It's the last kind of place you'd want to end up alone. In your defense, it's not like you had much of a choice; anyone who could've given you a lift is home and long asleep, Ubers are upwards of \$50 that you don't have, and you're in the final stretch back to your place anyway. At this point there's no turning back; home is the final destination, and the luring walk alone is the only way to get there.

Your pace quickens. Your own shadow startles you. Your pace quickens even more. This is 3:33 am. This is the empty street, the solitary walk home.

This is the real Upside Down.

Ghosts of My Past

By Julia Kolinski

On a pitch black road, I face the morgue of our memories. A haunted museum of what I used to call love.

Oh, the things we accept, the things we invent, when we are lost and desired and stuck in the dark...

I see shapes and shadows and outlines of lies, silhouettes of excuses from your hollowed out eyes and lips and shoulders and spine. No wonder I stayed, I had someone called mine, someone to sit with and someone to hold with my bedroom closing in and my breath running tight.

Inhale.
I'm devoted.
Exhale.

But when is devotion just fear in disguise?
All the greatest love stories contain wild rides, right?
Right.

In sickness and health
In graveyards and hell.
In half-hearted vows.
In men on the prowl.
In the crowded room
under dark, colored lights
so you didn't know whose hands
were whose.





Love(d) Me Like That

By Katherine Rose

Where am I? This isn't my window; this isn't my oversized bed. As I inhale once again, I'm struck with the musty air. It's heavy, it's thick.

“Fuck”



I don't even turn around; I don't have to. I've done it again. She's behind me. If I'm quiet enough, if I breathe deep enough, the only sounds left within the room are her slow breathing and the rain. It's rhythmic, it's quiet. I'm in her apartment. I'm in her bed. I'm staring out her window. Staring down at her wet streets, her soft streetlamps, her night sky.

I'm acutely aware of all the places she touched me: my lips, my neck, my thighs. I turn around and look at her, her soft face covered in freckles. Her long lashes rested over her cheeks. Her curly hair splayed around her like the rays surrounding the sun. She looks peaceful, a stark difference from the night before.

The lights were bright. Green. Pink. Blue. I don't remember finding her in the crowd of sweaty bodies. What song was even playing? Her smile was bright. Green. Pink. Blue. Her lips are on mine, and for the life of

me, I can't push away. I said I would push away the next time. There's always a next time. I can smell the weed in the air. I can taste the alcohol on her tongue.

But right now she is peaceful; an angel with eye-boogers and a stamp of dried drool leaking from her mouth. I look at her and I see it: us walking in the park, her hand attached to mine as if it was always supposed to be there, a smile on her face as she recounts some wild and crazy story about her roommates. I love it when she drifts away into a story, a light flashes in her eyes and she's suddenly so excited to share her thoughts and her opinions and her passions.

But right now she is asleep; unconscious and painfully unaware of the beauties I see in her. Her laugh. Her smile. I want to see



it all, even when she cries. Especially when she cries. I want to hold her when everything else has gotten too hard to bear, so at least, for a little while, I can make it all disappear. I want to celebrate her as no one has before. I want to celebrate her until I can see in her hazel eyes that she has never felt this loved before, this cherished, this ecstatic to be alive.

She lets out a crack of a snore. I melt a little.

Sometimes, I want to pull her outside to dance in the rain. Let her fight me until she realizes that as the water hits her skin, brushes down her face, her arms, her hair, her life will brush away too. I want to help her see that there's more to life than boys who only know how to break her heart. That maybe she could like me as more than just a drunken dream. Sometimes, I want to pull her outside to dance in the rain.



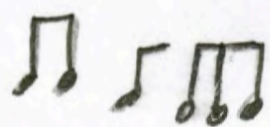
I want her to touch me like that. I want her to hold me like that. I want her to love me like that. I wish she loved me like that. But... she looks peaceful; the feelings that fester inside me cannot reach her. They never have. They never will. I should let go; I should move on, say no next time. I laugh. It's soft, it's quiet. As much as I tell myself, I can't come back, I know I will, I can't help it.

Her lashes flutter, she's dreaming. I hope it's light. I hope it's soft. I hope she's happy.





U up?

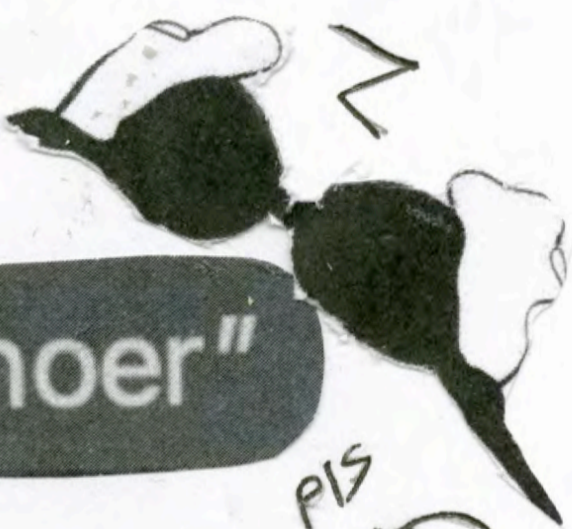


This song remind me of u



#

@



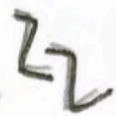
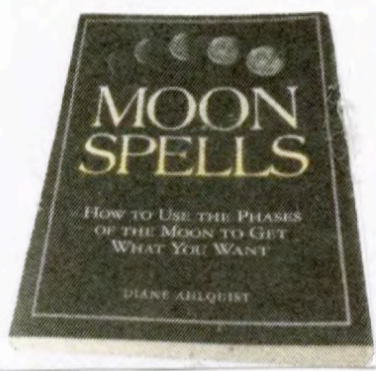
"I lvoe Yhoer"



PIS



would suckdick for one of those pushpop popsicles stattttt like fucking stattttttttt



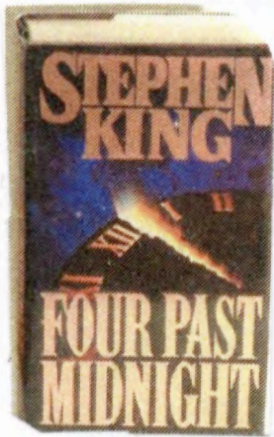
i dnot reembr

F*CK!



++

And Other Drunk Texts



im really fruknk and I miss sleeping with yoyu



Hi
Horny pls 🙏🙏🙏🙏
Still



↑
STAY IN SCHOOL
OR THIS COULD
BE YOU



J took my first bump



By: Vivian Li

FALSE DAWN (/fôls dôn/)

a transient light that precedes the rise of the sun by about an hour

The birds could have fooled me; they chirped and chirped and almost convinced me that daylight was here. But then they grew silent, and joined me as we waited. And waited. And waited; trapped in the realm of the False Dawn, the promise of light that might never actually seem to come.

Dawn had come for me in the past; it was evident in who I was. I've been a bright, bookish kid my whole life, I literally had a book account called rrealisticfiction (loosely inspired off of R&B artist Noname's book club) and have been giving my friends books for as long as I can remember. Back then, I was normal, happy, full. And I gave books to my friends as a way of spreading my own light.

One day, this book-giving nearly cost me my life. It was a beautiful day in early September, with sunshine sparkling through my dorm room, stretching a spotlight across the rows of books I had stacked upon my shelves. I leaned over my bookshelf to grab a copy of the Invisible Man because I thought this guy I invited over would appreciate it. I never reached the book.

I was jolted, flung over to the bed, held down and completely brutalized. Shame is a really crazy feeling in that way: your insides feel like they're twisting inside of themselves and your whole body begins to feel gelatinous. And that shame was a whirlpool of incessant thoughts. *How could I be so irresponsible? I barely knew this kid, why did I let him get close to me?? You don't even let your guy friends in there!!!*

i TRIED
THOUGHT
I TRAVE
TOUGHT



But I guess the trust I had in general human decency was just another False Dawn; a promising belief that there was at least a little light in everybody...even strangers, and even those who did not seem like strangers. He was a tall, lanky kid from a nearby college; he just appeared as an innocent kid who liked to read. I am the eldest daughter of an immigrant single mother, raised pretty humbly in Queens, but all the same a girl with big aspirations. Simply put, I've dealt with most adversity in a "Cranes in the Sky" by Solange type of way. So I just pulled the knife sticking out of my side – without even questioning why – and did my best to move on from what he did to me.

AWAY, AWAY
AWAY, AWAY

YEAH, IT'S LIKE CRANES IN THE SKY
SOMETIMES I DON'T WANNA FEEL THOSE METAL CLOUDS

My friends would've never guessed something was wrong and my GPA remained poppin'. Nevertheless, Solange was right: the more I worked, the more retail therapy I did, the more I pretended the problem didn't exist, the more I put on a smile for the world: the sadder I became.

TO RUN IT AWAY
THEN MY HEAD BE FEELING CLEARER
LEAD TO STATES
MOVING 'ROUND MAKE ME FEEL BETTER

AWAY, AWAY
I TRIED TO KEEP MYSELF
I RAN AROUND CIRCLES
THINK I MADE MYSELF D
I SLEPT IT AWAY, I SEXED
I READ IT AWAY

Maybe I am a False Dawn; a 4AM presence of light that is consumed by momentary darkness. Maybe my light has dimmed for a little. But the whole point of there being a "False Dawn" is that there's a real one out there waiting somewhere.

There's a light in the future even if you can't see it yet. That's what I'm holding onto.

AWAY

AWAY
YEAH,

YEAH, IT'S LIKE CRANES IN THE SKY
SOMETIMES I DON'T WANNA FEEL THOSE METAL

Lost in L'heure Bleue

by Audrey Weisburd

the city that never sleeps rests her tireless head
on the shoulder of a stranger on the subway
the stars begin to fade into emerging indigo
the moon follows along and subdues
even the nocturnal nod off for a moment
adolescent all nighters call it quits.
the whole world sleeps at once
but you were left behind
only you and l'heure bleue

SHEETS

the clock melted into a timeless nothing
the minute hand, the hour hand,
tangle together, intertwine.
my hand, your hand,
trace a gentle outline of
your face, my face,
wearing love, wearing lace
something gentle, something sweet,
conversations in the sheets

L'appel du Vide

In the space between each end of an opposite,
there lies a gaping hole - a void

This strange and empty space both
tortures and tempts us

Her name is L'appel du Vide, 'The Call of the Void';
and she is the line between flying and falling,

where a leap of faith becomes a last breath

She is the voice in your head that you hope isn't yours,

She lures you to jump, seduces you to swerve,
to crash, to binge, to shout, to surrender

L'appel du Vide is who places the pill to your tongue,

the scissors to your bangs, then drives

the needle through your nose

She is the fear we have of our own desires

Our own capabilities

Ourselves

Sorry...didn't mean to wake you.
The sun's coming up.
Welcome to 6:00am.



espresso

6 a.m. calls for
violent alarms for
the hour of corporate suffering,
here is the wake-up regime for
the man

6 a.m. silence or
a restless robin's song
these moments
with the birds feel
soft

how special it is
to watch the world yawn and stretch
to see the morning's first motions
in a sweet suburban sigh



how special it is
to feel your lucky mug's warmth
a bitter hug's worth
a espresso

a tireless fuel to a functional day
window signs flip to "open" in the corner cafe
a strip tease of simplicity
the gentle delight

Moody's Guide to: *The Morning After*

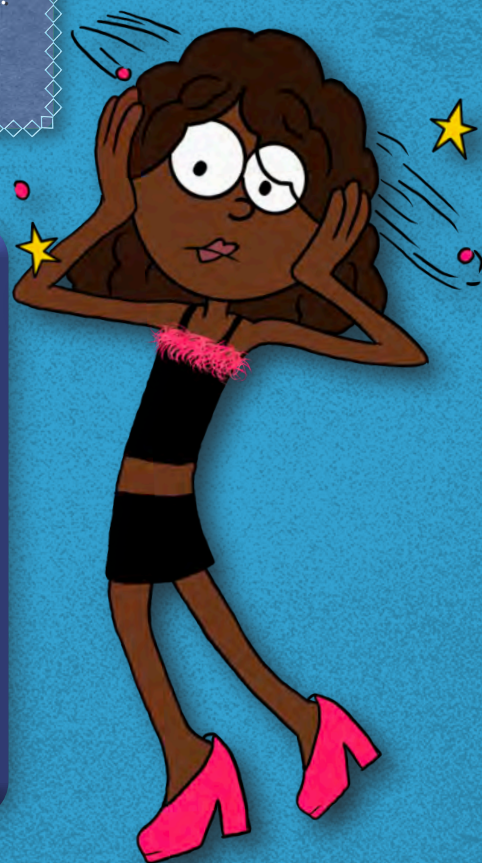
By Payton Jones

It's ok, hun. It happens to the best of us. Sometimes sex, alcohol and a late night turn into a sleepover. Besides, there's almost nothing more comfortable than a bed you should absolutely stay away from.

Don't worry, we gotchu. Welcome to Moody's Guide to the Morning After.

1. Wakey wakey.

Good morning, pumpkin. The world missed your beautiful face. Did you have fun? Do you need anything? Water? Tylenol? Time machine? Well, now that you're awake, it's time to very quickly assess the mood.



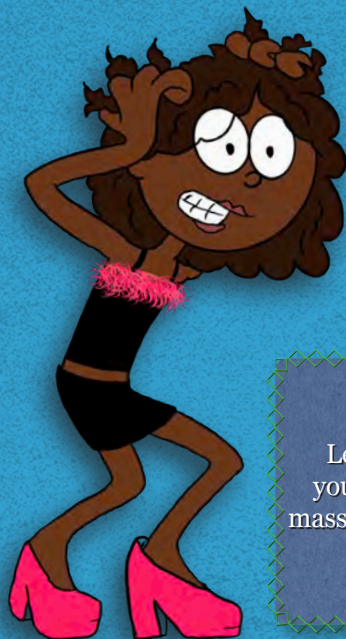
2. Read the room.

OK, you're up, things are groggy, I get it, but it's time to tap into your inner Lindsay Lohan and get a clue. Step 2 is all about reading the room. Where is the person from last night? Are they snuggled up next to you or are they across the bed? This is vital information, life or death even. Well... not life or death, but still important!



3. Get up. Get out.

I know, I know, you're relaxed, but you must get out of there. Once the sun comes up, things get weird and that's not what you need. Make sure you've got your phone, shoes, underwear, and lipgloss... then get your cute ass out of that bed! Say your goodbyes, and keep it mysterious. Or don't. I never do. The most important thing is that you have and execute the getaway plan. Get that Uber, get that Lyft—I don't care. Just get the hell out of there.



4. Scrub-a-fucking-dub.

Let the scorching hot water drain every last spec of dirt, spilled alcohol, and hookup off of your body. Put all the fruity-scented shit that you have in your hair. Give yourself a lil head massage while you're at it, because believe it or not, you deserve to be pampered...even if last night felt a bit contradictory to that statement.



5. Recharge

You know what to do for this. Do whatever the hell "recharge" means to you. Passing out until 7pm? Smoking copious amounts of weed from the bong you haven't cleaned since last week? Reading a romance novel, watching Bojack Horseman, applying a detox facemask? Any or all of the above, please.

I know hun, I know. The morning after can suck. But you are safe now. Look at me: today might be filled with hangxiety, apology texts that look like novels, regrets, and maybe even some memories that stamp your psyche like the bruises on your legs (wait a sec...how did those get there?). I know it can be unsettling to sit with. But remember, right now, right here, you are safe. The night is over. And a new day has come.

So go get 'em babe. Moody is proud of you <3

WALK OF SHAME

By Sarah Dickerson



The light of the afternoon sun produces a sharp twang in your temples as you stumble onto the sidewalk, mud-caked platforms in hand. Twisted ankles are the last thing you need to deal with right now. Right now is about getting back home and microwaving some hash browns. You need starches before your rejuvenating slumber, which will probably last around a day and a half.

You take each step forward, thinking consciously about holding back the climbing acid reflux in your throat. The flashbacks of cheap liquor and cigarettes are making your stomach clench uncomfortably. While checking your phone, you catch a glimpse of yourself in the black screen. You sigh as you open up the front camera. Surveying your cakey skin, clumpy eyelashes, and spit/vomit/substance-plastered knots in your hair, you decide you've seen worse. There are other things to worry about right now, anyway, like the location of the underwear that you're totally not wearing anymore. The gentle morning breeze has a personal mission to remind you of this problem; all you can do now is pull your hem down and pray. The intrusive thought of getting a public nudity charge enters your mind. You grip onto the hem of your sweatshirt for dear life.

Seeing a family in the distance, you glance down at your outfit. A hot sauce stain catches your attention, painting the sleeve of your sweatshirt. A flashback of being incredibly drunk in the Taco Bell waiting line has you gripping your thighs for dear life. The moth-eaten sweatshirt on your body is the only article of clothing covering your butt, a fact you remember as you straighten up to greet the family approaching you. So much for a self-reflective walk home. Your charm will mask whatever amount of crustiness you are portraying at this very moment,



Design by Maddie Sloyer



SEEMS LIKE A REGRETFUL NIGHT... I WONDER WHAT THE GROUPCHAT HAD TO SAY.

which, according to your front camera, is a lot. After nodding a "hello" in the family's direction, one of the parents chirps a "Good morning!"

You already know what they're thinking; your entire being is giving very she's had an adventure. However, the family is courteous enough to not make you feel like the walking dilemma that you currently are, which makes you snort. The family glances back at you as you snort at your own internal dialogue, wondering if they should intervene. You can feel their gaze on your back, but who gives a fuck? The turn for your street is just up ahead! Your aching body and pounding head refuse to let you sprint to the front door, though, no matter how much you desire to get home.

With your house in sight, you absentmindedly feel around for a pocket with your key in it. No key. That's when you realize it's probably because you're wearing a stranger's sweatshirt. There's a good chance your key is knee deep in an old crunch wrap supreme. Lovely.





HUUUGE CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

A lot of scary things go into a first hookup: a lot of trust, vulnerability---and with someone you know relatively nothing about. But on this day, you don't feel these scary things weighing you down for some strange reason. If anything, your strut feels light and airy; there's even a little pep in your step. Maybe it's because of the way things finally felt authentic, the way you don't just feel like a player in some fucked up, performative game. You woke up, and like many nights prior, you were not in your room. But! You looked over and saw this beautiful human next to you...and your initial reaction was NOT to acquire PWK (phone, wallet, keys) and get the fuck out of there. You actually fell back asleep and had a nice morning? THEIR ROOMMATES WATCHED YOU COME DOWN THE STAIRS WITH YOUR BOOTS IN HAND, and still, all you can feel is warmth and fuzziness?

Regardless, you keep your cool, and attempt to keep last night's dinner down while you're at it. You don't wanna freak out like that girl you just saw with the fat hot sauce stain, mumbling to herself about keys or somethin.



...OR WALK OF FAME?

By Nick Held

That 1pm walk home: basking in the aggressive sunlight, soaking in every bit of that life-giving vitamin C that only seems to intensify your throbbing headache. But this walk feels a little different than others. Honestly, you couldn't care less about your hangover. Life is good. Who cares that you're walking down the street in last night's clothes? After a distinguished college career of seemingly intentional shitty hookups, you've finally had one in which you've emerged net positive. Huuuge character development.

Manually, you place one foot in front of another, desperately trying to get home, solely motivated by a bong rip that will settle your stomach enough to help you exist as a normal person for the rest of the day. Shit. You remember you have a phone. You grab your phone to look at your camera roll, searching for any long-forgotten selfies with this unforgettable stranger. While spam clicking the power button, you see yourself in the tiny black screen, and for once, you are not met with the usual disgust or contempt you feel after seeing your reflection. You look pretty damn good.

While you try to process this feeling, you are almost immediately met with a wave of anxiety and nausea, causing your heart to race. You might be a little drunk still...no, you are definitely a little drunk still...but then something calms you: the adrenaline, perhaps, flowing from such an unfamiliar feeling after oh-so-many bad or plain-mistake hookups. Ok, ok - you remind yourself to pipe down. Or else you're going to throw up. Just breathe and reflect.

WAITTTTTT....YOU LOOK PRETTY DAMN GOOD.



Photo by Melissa Farias and Mia Ignazio

SHE RISES NONETHELESS

By Coco



The birds will announce her entrance. She makes a gradual climb from the horizon, casting a forgiving light that shines on the ruins left from the night before. Regardless of what occurred the last time you saw her, regardless of what took place in her nighttime absence, the sun rises nonetheless.

You will see her. Her brazen light glistens on the facets of office buildings like gems underneath a spotlight. She might peek through the slits of your curtains while you sleep, painting your wall with a bright stripe of light to remind you of her arrival.



You will feel her; her light yearns to touch everything within her reach. The moment you face her, you will feel her sweet rays of warmth breathing on your cheeks, and she will hug the parts of you that you allow her to: the bare skin on your neck, the fingers that poke out from your sleeves.

She will greet you, and invite you to grow with her throughout the day. Even if her nightly departure brought dropping temperatures that blanketed the ground with snow, even if her absence left you lonely and buried underneath your bed sheets, she will always greet you when it is her time to rise.

But there will be some days when you can't see her, when she is tucked beneath thick clusters of gray that pollute the sky with a darkness reminiscent of midnight. Some days, you might not feel her, either. Her warmth might be swept away by icy winds, forcing you to stay inside in moments you wish you could leave. And some days, you will not want to greet her. You might even feel repulsed by her light, barricading the window in your room to block out her flooding presence.

But even on these mornings—mornings in which you don't see her, feel her, or desire to greet her—she rises nonetheless. And though she may bring you progress, decline, or stagnance in her visit, she promises one thing before she leaves:

SHE WILL BE BACK AGAIN.



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Photo by Will Koning
Design by Lucas Marangoni