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### Reporter - February 11th 2011

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Taylor  
Simpson,  
You  
turn my  
software  
into **hardware.**  
Love, Sando





Travis Newberry, a second year Mechanical Engineering major, takes air during the Freeze Fest Rail Jam on Feb.4. | photograph by Jonathan Foster

Whether you're running around and yelling "cooties!" at the top of your lungs or you're standing outside your girlfriend's (or boyfriend's) window holding a boombox up and sending 80's music into the airwaves, one thing's for certain: there are a lot of ways to show someone you care. This week, *Reporter* helped members of the RIT community tell that special someone how they felt right on our magazine's cover. And today, we're sharing the love.

#### SPREADING THE LOVE

From Jan. 25 to Jan. 31, *Reporter* collected personal messages for Variable Valentines via e-mail. Immediately after receiving the first few entries, the art staff began putting together as many covers as they could, designing on a rolling basis.

In the interest of time and variety, messages kept under or close to the 100-character limit were prioritized. Due to extremely tight deadlines, not all valentines were made it to publication.

#### WHAT IS VARIABLE DATA PRINTING?

Variable data printing is a relatively new term for a redefined printing process which has only recently become practical with the rise of digital printing. Basically, images or text are a part of a database that feeds an algorithm plugging into a larger document. The end result is dynamic publishing of print material or many different versions of the same thing.

For this issue of *Reporter*, a separate record was created for each magazine. Our Production Manager Nicholas Gawreluk used XMPie to feed the data into an Adobe InDesign document, which was then printed at the Printing Applications Lab using the Kodak Nexpress S3000. All other pages were printed using the Goss Sunday 2000.

- 6. Know Your Roots:**  
*A History of Romantic Symbols*  
Love darts, Greek gods and ancient contraception.
- 7. Love Potions**  
Would you like to taste our delicious fruit nipples?
- 8. History of Kissing**  
Fireworks, bursts of light and four year olds.
- 10. Reviews**  
Website, internet, I'd like to cascade your stylesheets.
- 11. At Your Leisure**  
Get your drink on this Ballantine's Day.
- 12. Elves, Beasts and Love Poems**  
Half man, half bull. What would she see in a beast like you?
- 14. Long Distance:**  
*Using Technology to Stay Together*  
Nicholas Miloscia and Robert Conroy go the distance.

- 15. The Langes: Five Months Later**  
In eight months, Sara Lange planned a wedding, worked at two hospitals, and got married.
- 16. I Do's Heard Round the World**  
Marriages in different cultures.
- 20. When Things Go Wrong**  
Alanis Morissette is the only one who understands.
- 22. In The Shadow of an Unknown Stalker**  
David Gasser, I've got my eye on you.
- 25. Addicted to You**  
*I just want her back.*
- 27. Word on the Street**  
What's the craziest thing you've done for love?
- 29. Sexting:**  
*Harmless Fun or Harmful Habit*  
Technology brings about a new trend.
- 31. Pondering Plurality**  
Polygamy in the modern world.

- 32. Chivalry**  
A dying tradition or a living practice?

## Stop By The Gift Shop

From behind the immense stacks of papers littering the gift shop emerges a large, yellow figure. "What'll it be?" it roars, as it removes the mask of what you realize is a hazmat suit. You find yourself face-to-face with an attractive young woman decked out with some kind of pyromascara, her eyelashes stretching into the sky. "Eduardo," she calls out, and her eyebrows furrow like two plump caterpillars. Seconds later, Eduardo gushes forth from the office. "What seems to be the matter?" he asks, his voice sweet as a bonbon. He glances your way and flicks you a smile. You blush and immediately break into a cacophony of coughs to hide your shyness. "Are you alright? Come into my office and we'll get you some water." Eduardo's concern melts across his face. For a moment, he reminds you of cancer. "He's fine," spits the girl, and then shoots you an unexpected come-hither look.

IF YOU DECIDE TO FOLLOW EDUARDO, TURN TO PAGE 5.  
IF YOU DECIDE TO IGNORE EDUARDO, TURN TO PAGE 7.

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## A Simple Sonnet

In these pages, there lie a few great tales

That tell of sexts, gamers, stalkers, lovers

Or strange facts an editor discovers

And even unrelated jams of rails

But did you know Cupid takes cues from snails?

And we've got the variable covers

For which we sought love notes from our readers

Who may have noticed a suspicious trail

Flipping through pages for an adventure

Beginning with knights in shining armor

But quickly trapping you inside a cage

The ending will reveal a heart wrencher

But not *Reporter*, that faithful charmer

Who's earned your affections, so turn the page!

(See "Elves, Beasts and Love Poems" on page 12 and  
"In The Shadows of an Unknown Stalker" on page 22.)

(See Table of Contents on page 3.)

(See "Know Your Roots" on page 6.)

(See "Sensuality of Androids" on page 10.)

(See "Chivalry" on page 32.)

(See "When Things Go Wroongs" on page 20.)

*MKV Villavicencio*

Madeleine Villavicencio

EDITOR IN CHIEF



### Head To The Food Court

The red and yellow lights from Pita Cremator glare down at you and cast a *devour pita gluttonously* spell upon you. You pant, perplexed by the colorful whorl of the menu above. Roasted cucumber with traumatic hummus or barbecued muzzle with lima bean purée — you can't make up your mind. A fidgety man with a bucket of a stomach lurches your way, his mouth smacking like a bovine. You are amazed by his pasty waves. "Welcome to Pita Cremator. What would you like today?" He blinks expectantly.

IF YOU DECIDE TO ORDER ROASTED CUCUMBER WITH TRAUMATIC HUMMUS, TURN TO PAGE 25.

IF YOU DECIDE TO ORDER BARBECUED MUZZLE WITH LIMA BEAN PURÉE, TURN TO PAGE 15.

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### Follow Eduardo

As you enter Eduardo's office, you continue your coughing fit with the prowess of a lifelong actor. The room's wallpaper is a hideous tan-gold color with busy blue vine prints zigzagging throughout. Eduardo has several framed paintings — landscapes, mostly — and not a single thing matches. A dusty picture of a churlish-looking boy with a swamp of buckteeth and blubbery cheeks for a face sits upon his desk. "Son, or former lover?" you ponder.

Eduardo swaggers over to his water closet. When he turns the sink handle, the faucet spits loudly before liquid streams into the glass. He hands the glass to you and gestures to a chair, his eyes humming with geniality.

IF YOU DECIDE TO HAVE A SEAT, TURN TO PAGE 13.

IF YOU DECIDE TO DECLINE HIS GESTURE AND **GTFO**, TURN TO PAGE 32.

# Know Your Roots

## A Brief History of Romantic Symbols

by Alex Rogala | illustration by Joanna Eberts

As Valentine's Day approaches, the world turns pink. Every February, greeting card stores nationwide are well stocked for the occasion, bursting at the seams with toy Cupids and chocolate hearts. We've all seen the symbols that take over our shops and homes for a month, but where exactly did they originate? Do they have hidden meanings? It's a long and murky trip through history, but we at **REPORTER** have compiled a brief primer on the origins of several common romantic symbols.

### HEARTS

In many ancient cultures, the heart was regarded as the seat of human emotion. Over time, it gradually came to symbolize romantic love. Yet, the heart symbol in use today bears little resemblance to the human heart itself. Although there are a variety of explanations for this disconnect, one of the most promising ties the symbol to *silphium*.

A long-extinct, fennel-like plant, *silphium* was once used as an early form of birth control. Its seeds bore a striking resemblance to the heart symbol, and once it became a lucrative cash crop, images of these seeds began appearing on currency. Surviving coins from the ancient city-state Cyrene, for example, depict a symbol that remains virtually unchanged 2,000 years later.

Still, the origins of the heart symbol are a source of heated debate, and *silphium* is only one of many potential origins. Some theories reference sexual imagery supposedly hidden in the symbol, such as breasts or testicles. Others still attribute it to early, inaccurate descriptions of the human heart. The ancient Cyrenaic coins, however, remain the heart symbol's most tangible predecessor.

### CUPID

Everything from greeting cards to novelty condoms sport Cupid's image, but he's got a far longer history than many realize. In Greco-Roman mythology, Cupid — *Eros* in Greek — was the god of erotic love and desire. Although there is a significant overlap between these two figures, they each have their own unique stories.

Greek mythology states that *Eros* emerged from chaos around the same time as both *Gaia* (Earth) and the underworld, *Tartarus*. In Roman mythology, Cupid is the son of *Venus*, the Roman goddess of love and beauty. Although he is

featured prominently in myth, Cupid is most commonly remembered for his forbidden love with the mortal *Psyche*.

As for Cupid's trademark bow and arrow? Experts have suggested a relation between these tools of love and *love darts*, small, calcified formulations used by certain species of snails to begin the mating process. This biological origin, interestingly enough, appears to transcend culture — *Kāma*, the Hindu god of love, sports a similar bow and arrow.

### RINGS

The concept of *betrothal rings* has existed since ancient Rome. They enjoyed a resurgence during the Middle Ages, when Pope Innocent III established a mandatory waiting period before marriage. During this period of engagement, rings became a strong symbol of commitment to a loved one, both romantically and financially.

Early on, these rings were merely simple bands; but as time progressed, they became more elaborate. Ring smiths began experimenting with various gems, and during the 15th century the first diamond ring was cut.

Although engagement rings have occasionally been worn on the thumb and even toes, they have traditionally been worn on the fourth finger of the left hand. According to legend, it was once believed that the *vena amoris* — the vein of love — led directly from this finger to the heart.

For many years, only women wore engagement rings. It wasn't until the mid-20th century that they became common for both partners. Once De Beers, a well-known diamond jeweler, began several particularly clever marketing campaigns to counter dropping diamond sales, the characteristic diamond-studded rings of today rose to prominence.



Unfortunately, this barely scratches the surface of these symbols' cryptic origins. Much of the rich history behind these symbols has vanished with the steady march of time. Yet the symbols themselves have survived for centuries, a reminder of romances past. **R**

# LOVE POTIONS

story & photograph by Emily Mohlmann

*Aphrodisiacs* — foods, herbs or aromas said to enhance sex drive and performance — have been around for centuries. The term comes from the Greek goddess of love, *Aphrodite*. The first aphrodisiac that Greeks consumed were parts of *Aphrodite's* sacred totem animal, sparrows, including their heart and brain.

Up until the 18th century, most aphrodisiac recipes were created by Galen, a Roman physician. He theorized that warm, moist food and heavily-peppered fare would serve as good aphrodisiacs. During this time, there was little distinction between lust and sexual function. As a result, consuming aphrodisiacs was long thought to cure impotence and infertility.

People consumed food shaped like thighs or genitals, such as mandrake roots and oysters, in order to increase their fertility. Malnutrition was rampant, which affected fertility and the ability to perform, so aphrodisiacs of the time were foods with high nutritional value. By consuming these nutritionally rich foods, amour returned.

Today, we know aphrodisiacs can't cure infertility or impotence. Users of modern aphrodisiacs instead bank on the ability to increase lust or sexual desire.

### Fruits of the Womb

*Bananas* possess an obvious shape, but it's an invisible ingredient that increases desire. Bananas contain an enzyme called bromelain, said to increase male performance. They also contain high amounts of potassium and vitamin B, necessary for sex hormone production.

*Strawberries*, known as fruit nipples, have long been considered symbols of love: They've appeared in art and poetry since 200 B.C. The enormous amount of seeds, representative of fertility, is thought to have inspired their identity as an aphrodisiac. But appearance isn't everything: Like bananas, strawberries contain potassium, vitamin C, folic acid and iron; all of which are said to boost libido.

To ease that full feeling after a romantic meal, indulge in some digestion-aiding *pineapple*. It will not only leave you feeling less bloated, but this vitamin C rich fruit fights impotence.

### Liquor, Chocolate and Carrots?

Of all aphrodisiacs past and present, *alcohol* has never left the list. Most people are well aware of alcohol's



relaxing effects, and this is exactly what makes it a good aphrodisiac. However, a line from "Macbeth" contains this appeal to moderation: "[Alcohol] increases the desire, but takes away the performance."

The Aztecs considered *chocolate* the "nourishment of the Gods." Luckily, today chocolate is available for mortal consumption. The Aztec emperor, Montezuma, is said to have drunk 50 goblets of melted chocolate a day in his quest to sleep with 600 women. Instead of nutritional value, the chemicals in chocolate are said to affect neurotransmitters in the brain. They increase serotonin and phenylethylamine levels, which control your mood and cause you to fall in love.

Beyond improved vision, *carrots* may improve male bedroom performance. Their phallic shape has made them a staple since ancient times, and Early Middle Eastern royalty would consume carrots to aid in seduction. They're high in vitamins and beta-carotene, which have a positive effect on sex hormones.

### Additives

On top of foods that can be consumed alone, there are ingredients that can be added to any dish to spice up passion.

*Garlic*, mostly known for causing bad breath, is believed to increase sexual desire, as well as blood flow, which is beneficial in the treatment of impotence in men. To avoid being the only one covered in the clove's perfume, it's advisable that both partners partake of it together.

The *almond* is a long-standing symbol of fertility, and has been considered an aphrodisiac since

biblical times. If you're looking to pique your lady's interest, have her eat some or find a scented candle. The scent is what is believed to arouse women. Like many aphrodisiacs, almonds are high in vitamin E and considered the "sex vitamin."

So, the next time you plan a romantic dinner for two, try incorporating one or more of these foods in the mix. You just might end your night in the bedroom. **R**

### Ignore Eduardo

You ignore Eduardo's concern and he appears offended. A grimace snaps across his face as he shuts the office door, leaving you alone with the strange girl. "So," she smirks. "What'll it be?"

You order what you came here for — an internet-enabled heliolampshade — but, just as you think your business is through, she stops you. "Don't think I'll let you get away with that." You turn around, and she points at your pocket. You reach in and pull out a small glass giraffe. Puzzled, you try to explain, but she interrupts. "I have a favor to ask of you. I believe, given your current status as a zoo gift shop kleptomaniac, that you will be wise enough to accept. Dinner. This Monday at seven at the Stumbling Monk." You slide the giraffe figurine across the counter.

IF YOU DECIDE TO MAKE A DASH FOR IT, TURN TO PAGE 31.

IF YOU DECIDE TO ACCEPT HER OFFER, TURN TO PAGE 11.

# A HISTORY OF kissing

by David Keith Gasser  
photograph by Robert Bredvad

It was early spring; the dark and mysterious orbs of her eyes shone out watchfully as I drew near. *Putting on my best devil-may-care grin, I leaned in for the kill.* Obliging, she proffered up her lips and continued to watch carefully up until the moment we made contact. Fireworks, bursts of light, it was indeed a whole new world of enjoyment that had been opened up in that one split-second. That's where it all began for me, my grandparents' 30th anniversary. I was four, and the lucky lady was a cougar at five and a half.

The act of kissing is practiced by an estimated 90 percent of the world's population, taking place all across differing climates, cultures and regions of the planet. In the western world especially, kissing, and the affection that it inspires, is an integral part of a relationship. The act itself, when examined on a barebones level, doesn't necessarily lend itself to ideas of romance and love. Where did it all begin?

In 1991, Vaughn Bryant, the dean of Anthropology at Texas A&M, published a paper in which he details the origins and spread of kissing throughout history. Vaughn explains that, though ancient texts and paintings can be found as late as 3000 B.C., it is not until 1500 B.C. that the first mention of what could be considered a kiss was found in the Vedic literature of India. That kiss was more of what is popularly known today as an *eskimo kiss*, which simply involved the rubbing and pressing of noses together as a display of affection. Although the kiss certainly evolved from there, this simple act can still elicit the same feelings today.

Moving forward about 1,000 years, the Indian epic "Mahabharata" is written. This epic contains distinct mentions of lip kissing as an expression of care. Even then, in 500 B.C., the ritual of kissing was only to be found in the Indian subcontinent. However, in 326 B.C., Alexander the Great conquered


northwestern India, exposing the ritual of kissing to the wider world, and thus he became a personal hero of mine.

Even at this time, kissing has yet to become widespread. Eastern Mediterranean groups, though somewhat integrated by their temporary unification under Alexander the Great, lacked enthusiasm for this practice. It's hypothesized that either the Eastern Mediterranean people found it repulsive due to the involved sharing of saliva, or they may have simply rejected it because of its popularity with their Greek conquerors. But when Alexander's empire collapsed in 321 B.C., the spread of kissing came to a temporary halt.

It is the Romans, not the Greeks, who really deserve the credit for elevating kissing to the worldwide pleasure that it is today. When the Roman Republic expanded across Europe, North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, they carried the act of kissing with them. It didn't spread into Asian and South Pacific cultures until it was brought by European explorers under the reigns of Imperial Britain and Spain.

It's easy to see the variety in kisses that are shared today. Lovers exchange a small peck on the cheek or enjoy an extended make-out session; siblings might kiss each other hello and a mother might kiss her child goodnight; a Rabbi will kiss the

Torah and a Catholic will kiss the papal ring. This great variety can also be attributed back to the Romans, who enjoyed three basic types of kisses. They were the *osculum*, a kiss of greeting and friendship; the *basium*, which was to show affection; and the *savium*, which is sometimes called the "ultimate kiss" and was known as a kiss of wild passion between lovers. I imagine that many an enterprising love-bird would leap in joy if their kiss was described as being full of "wild passion."

While it is possible to see great diversity and historical significance in the practice of kissing, the anthropological reason behind the kiss is still largely unknown. Some researchers hypothesize it may be linked to ancient mothers, who would pre-chew food and then share it orally with their child. After all, we didn't always have Gerber to rely on. From the tenderness and affection of the action present in the mother-child relationship, it's only a short leap to kissing when someone wants to express similar feelings to their lover. Whatever the biological reason, kissing has certainly become an enjoyable practice, deeply engrained into nearly every culture of the world. 

*"The act of kissing is practiced by an estimated 90 percent of the world's population."*

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**Lovers exchange a small peck on the cheek or enjoy an extended make-out session; siblings might kiss each other hello and a mother might kiss her child good night; a Rabbi will kiss the Torah and a Catholic will kiss the papal ring.**

## LIKE A LITTLE

Rating: Skip It!



Like A Little (<http://likealittle.com>) is a website offering users the ability to “flirt anonymously with students on your campus.” Users submit posts about a person on campus who has struck their fancy. The posts take on the basic format of “*location, gender, hair color. Personal message.*” For example “At Crossroads, male, brown hair. You’re the perfect renaissance man with muscles and intelligence to spare.” Obviously, that one was referring to me.

Trying out this site was quite the experience. Reading through the posts on RIT’s page, there are several distinct categories that the comments seem to fall into. There are the impressively vague descriptions of the opposite sex that are bombarded with requests for further details; the amusingly disturbing anecdotes about what the poster would or would not do with their target’s body; the occasionally cute, if shy, declaration of a passerby’s beauty; and the often confusing personal ads welcoming the opposite sex to partake in a myriad of endeavors (sexual or otherwise).

Over the last couple of weeks, I’ve made a number of posts in the interest of learning more about this recent phenomenon. I complimented a couple girls and even tried recounting a few silly anecdotes from passing conversations to help them know I was talking about them. Despite these efforts, I have yet to meet anyone as a result of using Like A Little. I’ve had a few responses, but that’s it. No dates, no midnight trips to the Corner Store, no new love of my life. Instead, all I got were a few creepy intimations that another user would, perhaps, perform better than the person I was referring to, and one confusing anecdote about gingers.

For me, Like A Little is definitely a pass. I don’t profess to be any master of lady wooing, but this website is just depressingly anonymous and full of pent-up emotions that people just won’t express in real life for one reason or another. I’ll take my chances with my standby pick up line, “Want to make like a fabric softener and snuggle?”

## WEBSITE | DATING | FREE

by David Keith Gasser

# THE SENSUALITY OF ANDROIDS

by Liz Shaw

*You’re the hero of the story! At each turn of events you will have the power to choose your next move. This adventure takes place across the whole magazine. When you reach a turning point, just flip to the indicated page to continue your adventure.*

“They don’t make lovers like they used to,” you think to yourself, your eyes drifting over the tender display of affection between two sloths. The pungent odor of animal love wafts through the air of the Marchessies Zoo as the courting sloths continue their plodding fit of passion. Your eyes swell with tears. But enough romance. Your stomach grumbles, urging you to forget your own loneliness in favor of mastication. You whip your heel into the gravel, pivot around with a speed that sloths have never known, as you make your way to a massive dome: the zoo gift shop and food court. The store houses everything a zoophile could desire: salmon-scented candles, figurines and plushies that reek of pineapple and goat fibers. The dung-stained floorboards creak beneath your steps as you traipse onward into the darkness.

IF YOU DECIDE TO STOP BY THE GIFT SHOP, TURN TO PAGE 3.

IF YOU DECIDE TO HEAD TO THE FOOD COURT, TURN TO PAGE 4.

# AT YOUR LEISURE

by James Arn with contributions by Alex Rogala

## QUOTE

“Who would give a law to lovers? Love is unto itself a higher law.”

– Boethius

## POP QUIZ OF LOVE

1. The word “love” is derived from the ancient word *lubhyati*, from which language?

- a. Latin
- b. Farsi
- c. Sanskrit
- d. Phrygian

2. The feeling of euphoria that comes from being in love is caused by \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. Dopamine
- b. Parathyroid hormone
- c. Testosterone and estrogen
- d. Adrenaline

3. The word lesbian comes from the name of the Greek island of Lesbos, which was the home of which famed poet?

- a. Homer
- b. Sapphos
- c. Theodectes
- d. Agathon

4. Arctophilia is the love of \_\_\_\_\_?

- a. Arches
- b. Teddy bears
- c. Octopusses
- d. Chocolate candies

5. Love darts are which of the following?

- a. What cupid shoots from his bow
- b. A fascinating new love game
- c. Barbs produced by hermaphroditic snails before mating
- d. A dildo with a tip shaped like a mace

Quiz Answers: 1: c; 2: a; 3: b; 4: b; 5: c

## Accept Her Offer

You catch the bus to the neighborhood where the Stumbling Monk and that tainted girl are waiting for you. A sweet old lady hobbles onto the bus and sits down next to you.

During the long ride you ponder what the girl has planned for you. Someone taps you on the shoulder. You turn your head and realize the old lady has fallen asleep beside you. When the bus driver calls out your stop, you turn to the old lady and attempt to wake her, but she doesn’t respond. “Ma’am? I have to leave now.” The bus screeches to a halt and her body smacks violently against the floor. You realize the woman had died on your shoulder 45 minutes ago.

The bus driver rushes over, concern flashing over his well-chiseled face. For a fleeting moment, you forget about the dead body and concern yourself with copulation.

IF YOU DECIDE TO HELP THE ALLURING BUS DRIVER, TURN TO PAGE 19.  
IF YOU DECIDE TO LEAVE THE BUS, TURN TO PAGE 23.

## WORD OF THE WEEK

Love *n.*

An affection of the mind excited by beauty and worth of any kind, or by the qualities of an object which communicate pleasure, sensual or intellectual. It is opposed to hatred. Love between the sexes is a compound affection, consisting of esteem, benevolence, and animal desire. Love is excited by pleasing qualities of any kind, as by kindness, benevolence, charity, and by the qualities which render social intercourse agreeable. In the latter case, love is ardent friendship, or a strong attachment springing from good will and esteem, and the pleasure derived from the company, civilities and kindness of others. *I would do anything for love, but I won't do that.*

Definition taken from the 1828 edition of Webster’s English Dictionary.

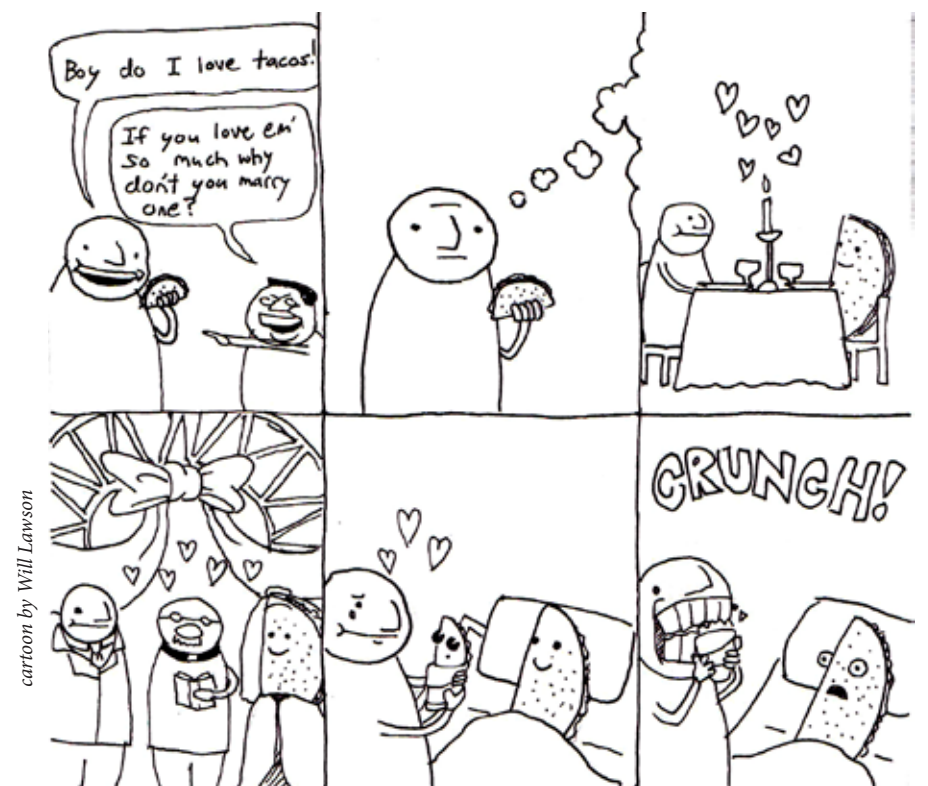
## REPORTER RECOMMENDS

BALLANTINE’S DAY

It’s a general fact of life: love is pretty great. At least when it works. At first, it’s like a giant phantasmagoria of rainbows, kittens and electric sheep. “Man,” you think to yourself with a twinkle in your eye, “this love thing is pretty sweet.”

But you’re living a lie. Somewhere down the line, the blissful jog through the fields of love has transformed into a nightmarish nature trek from hell. Perhaps your partner has fallen for that sweet new suit in corporate. Or her ill-timed migraines interfere with your regularly scheduled bondage nights. What you need is a friend.

Ballantine’s, a brand of cheap Scotch whisky, just may be the solution. For the paltry sum of \$16, you could be in blissful blended malt heaven. It’s modestly priced — and aptly named. So switch your V for some B, and get your Ballantine’s on. **R**



cartoon by Will Lawson



# ELVES, BEASTS & LOVE POEMS

by Evan Williams | illustration by Joanna Eberts

*The forest is black. What little moonlight spears its way through the dense canopy of trees, creating ghostly columns of silver and blue. You sniff the air, once, twice; you're not alone. You hope for friend, but prepare for foe. As you approach, your eyes grow wide, your jaw grows slack, and your loincloth grows tight.*

*Standing there is the most beautiful Blood Elf you've ever laid your Tauren eyes on. Your first instinct is to say "hello," but you hesitate. You're a 10-foot tall half man, half bull hybrid with a septum piercing. What's she ever going to see in a beast like you? But wait, you're a battle-tested warrior. Nothing scares you! You stroke your horns for good luck and stride out there to wage war with love.*



While not all relationships that start through online games like "World of Warcraft" (WoW) begin in this fashion, sites like DateCraft and Gaming Passions have created large communities for gamers to meet, chat and hook-up. Meeting that certain someone through a game like WoW or "Halo 3" can present unique challenges, like finding time to flirt while gunning down alien hordes. As a result, these communities can be a blessing. Most of them are free and boast thousands of members.

In 2009, the online gaming industry raked in over \$15 billion worldwide, and it has shown no signs of slowing down. Twenty million Xbox Live users and 40 million PlayStation Network accounts were tallied that year, with Xbox Live recording 17 billion hours played. Fantasy Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Games, or Fantasy MMORPGs, are among the most popular, with the immensely popular "World of Warcraft" maintaining its hold as the king of PC MMOs.

Surprisingly, in the 25 to 44 year old demographic, there is a near 50-50 split between the genders of online gamers. Gamers are 58 percent male and 42 percent female, much closer than people might expect from a supposedly male-dominated arena. It is also important to note that online gaming is

a very social activity. With many games requiring vast amounts of teamwork to complete missions, gaming forces people to interact and communicate with each other.

After probing through the great anonymous mass that is the internet, prodding various forums and message boards from sites like Gaming Passion and DateCraft, I compiled a series of anecdotes about the dramas involved with starting and maintaining a gaming-based relationship. One poster claimed to have slept with a girl from his high school because of their mutual fascination with WoW. Yet another is even planning to take the big leap with his online gaming lover. "We've been together for over two years now," he stated. "We're looking to get hitched sometime after we both finish graduating."

For yet another player, these online interactions led him to discover he was gay. "Looking back on it, I think it was a way for me to maintain romantic relationships with women without ever having to confront the physical reality of them," he recalled.

When asked about in-game flirting, players said it occurs frequently and the real-life rules still apply. "It's all the same thing in essence. You're trying to spend time with someone and you're trying to make them feel special," explained one.

Through all of these stories, several emphasized the power of games' effect on relationships. One involved a female player's abusive marriage. "Every time she queued up, you could hear him in the background berating her," one poster recalled. "She took her kids and moved in with a friend from her guild. They're currently married, and she even had another kid with him." All this makes the case that online gaming can be just as viable a source of social interaction as any other medium. Human connectivity knows no bounds and defines its own convention; so does the heart. **R**



## Have A Seat

He beams you a smile, his mouth like a massive slab of tangerine. "Tell me," he says, "do you like landscapes?" He gestures to a painting on the wall that looks less like a peaceful arboreal scene than a verdant maze of hyperactive Muppets. "Some of my work will be featured at the Chaotic Slacker Art Gallery this Monday," He pauses, takes a sip of his coffee, and arches his eyebrows intently. "You should join me. I won't take no for an answer," he says, and slips a card across the table. It reads "Happy Valentine's Day" in blood red ink.

"Think for yourself," he smirks, and winks smugly. "It would be my pleasure." He gives you a gentle pat on the shoulder. As you leave his office, you notice a bronze statue of a demented cat excitedly pinning down a mouse.

IF YOU DECIDE TO DECLINE HIS GESTURE AND **GTFO**, TURN TO PAGE 32.  
IF YOU DECIDE TO ATTEND HIS RECEPTION, TURN TO PAGE 29.

“We've been together for over two years now ... We're looking to get hitched sometime after we both finish graduating.”



# the Long Distance: TECHNOLOGY AND TOGETHERNESS

by Christina Belisle | photo illustration by Joi Ong



Having a partner live far away for a long period can damage otherwise healthy relationships. Not all of them can withstand the strain physical distance can cause, but with today's technology, it's getting easier.

Nicholas Miloscia, a second year New Media Interactive Development major, is familiar with the trials of a long distance relationship. He and his boyfriend, Robert Conroy, started dating a week before he moved to RIT his freshman year. Miloscia, 19, and Conroy, 20, are both Long Island natives who attended the St. John the Baptist Diocesan High School in West Islip. Since its beginning, most of their relationship has been spent apart. With RIT's short breaks and Conroy's lack of a driver's license, the 40-minute distance between their homes makes dates difficult to arrange.

Most students come to RIT from outside Rochester, more than half outside New York state, and many try to sustain ties despite separation. Miloscia and Conroy provide just one example of the toll distance can take, and the methods employed to overcome it.

While at RIT, they keep in contact via chat programs, social networks and texting. They video chat using Skype. It allows them to communicate, but it's not always easy.

"It's hard to relate to some of the stories since I don't know any of the people [in them]," Conroy said. "So most of the time we don't talk much."

"It isn't easy to always find time to talk, and sometimes, we have too much time to talk but nothing to talk about. I try to include him in a lot of the things I do and make sure to talk to him every day, but there have been days where school gets in the way or I just don't feel like sitting in front of my webcam, doing nothing," Miloscia added.


During breaks, they spend as much time as possible together in the two or three days that their schedules allow. They go to the movies, go shopping, play video games, and face off with Pokémon cards. Conroy is currently working on his associate's degree in Liberal Arts at Nassau Community College in Garden City, N.Y.; he is also works a job at a

pharmacy, so his schedule often doesn't match RIT's abbreviated breaks.

"It kind of seems like our relationship is more long distance the closer we are," Miloscia said. "However, it is great to finally see him again after a long time." Conroy added, "But all of this probably makes it more exciting when we actually can see each other since we don't take it for granted ... other than that, it's kind of lonely only being able to see each other, like, three days on the breaks."

When they talk, they playfully tease each other, and a deep bond is apparent. "I think what keeps us together so well is that he's my best friend, first and foremost," Miloscia said.

Conroy isn't afraid their relationship will end anytime soon. "We have been doing this for two years almost, and it seems to be great and we aren't bored of each other, so unless something major happens it will most likely last for a long time."

"Although space is nice," Miloscia said, "I think we'd be happier if we were closer." 

# The Langes: Five Months Later

by Emily Bogle | photograph by Prisca Edwards



Last spring when Sara Lange (née Burgess) was interviewed by **REPORTER**, she was engaged to Kadan Lange, her high school sweetheart. Since then, she has planned her wedding, moved to Syracuse for her final year as a Diagnostic Medical Sonography student — where she has worked at two hospitals — and gotten married.

Spending her last year in college away from her friends in Rochester has helped Sara prepare for post-college life. Last September, she started working at Crouse Hospital, and a few days later, on Sept. 25, she and Kadan Lange were married. They stood on a stage overlooking Lake Ontario at Chimney Bluffs State Park in Wolcott, N.Y. There were about 100 guests, including family and friends from college and high school.

Instead of wearing traditional matching bridesmaid dresses and groomsmen tuxes, the wedding party wore white with gray accent pieces, like sashes or vests. One groomsman asked if he could wear fairy wings. In response to Kadan's opposition, all the groomsmen decided to don the wings come the wedding day. Sara was surprised by the glittery accent pieces, but quickly accepted the idea. "Let there be fairies," she said between giggles. The groomsmen flitted down the aisle as the bridesmaids skipped alongside them.

The couple had a short ceremony where they read their own vows to each other as Kadan's uncle officiated. They had comfort food for dinner including chicken, corn on the cob and mashed potatoes. The couple chose to forgo cake, instead allowing guests to create their own ice cream sundaes. The casual atmosphere reflected the couple's personalities as they chatted with their friends and family in a non-traditional reception.

The wedding bliss didn't last for long, because the next morning Kadan was on his way to Oklahoma, where he is currently stationed in the Army. Sara returned to Syracuse, and their long distance relationship continued. Since then, they have only seen each other briefly, two days at Thanksgiving and a week




Sara and Kadan Lange were married by the water at Chimney Bluffs State Park, N.Y. on Sept. 26, 2010. Kadan's brothers joined them on the stage as Kadan's uncle, Tom Lange, pronounced them man and wife.

at Christmas. Sara noted that she used to become frustrated by the distance before they were engaged, but she has since learned to cope with the distance.

"Now that there is an end in sight ... I'm graduating, and it makes it easier to get through because it's only three more months," Sara said. She spends most nights searching for affordable apartments in Oklahoma that the couple can share when she moves there after graduation.

Since their marriage, they have already noticed changes in how they react and treat each other. Sara expected married life to be more difficult than it has been so far, but the couple has accepted that their decisions affect each other and work well to compromise when necessary. She has become more responsible with money because she is not the sole beneficiary on purchases and finances.

There are still many uncertainties for Sara and Kadan. She must find a job in Oklahoma, he is applying to flight school in Alabama, and they are both still apartment hunting. Despite these challenges, they are ready to settle down together.

"We've been apart for a long time," Sara said. "It will be nice to have that one chunk of normalcy where I know when I wake up that he'll be there and when I come home from work, he'll be there." 



**Order Barbecued Muzzle With Lima Beans Puree**

You down the barbecued muzzle and lima bean purée and stay seated for a few minutes to take in the scenery at Pita Cremator. The logo, a charred pita with a fretful face running away from the devil, makes you smile. "It's business time," you think.

**HEAD TO THE GIFT SHOP. TURN TO PAGE 3.**

A large, vibrant bouquet of pink flowers, possibly lilies or similar, with green foliage, is positioned behind the title text.

# I Do's Heard Round the World:

MARRIAGES IN DIFFERENT CULTURES

*by Bonnie Greenberg  
photographs by Joi Ong*

Ah, love. When we, as American students, think of the (oftentimes dreaded) four-letter word, certain images come to mind: a couple holding hands, exchanging kisses in the moonlight. And then, there's the wedding. Yes, marriage, the act of committing yourself to a single person for the rest of your life. In every country, in every culture, the sentiment is exactly the same. However, while we may have a pretty resolute image of the Big Day in our heads, our American wedding traditions may seem laughable and downright strange to people of other cultures.





**Yes, marriage — the act of committing yourself to a single person for the rest of your life.**

### Help The Alluring Bus Driver

As the two of you hoist the dead lady onto the bus driver's back, your hand slips tenderly over his arm. He gazes at you and smiles, genuine warmth oozing from his skin. With a tip of his hat, he gets up and places the dead body on a seat and straps it in. He moves to the loudspeaker and announces, "I apologize for the inconvenience, but it appears we are running behind by a couple of minutes due to an unfortunate circumstance. Just bear with me; I'll be starting the bus now." He winks your way.

The dead body tilts back in its seat, and other passengers look horrified. Many hurriedly exit the bus at the next stop, leaving you practically alone with the bus driver. "Is this RTA policy?" you wonder. He laughs and says, "This happens all the time. I must be a soothing driver." He winks.

IF YOU DECIDE TO LEAVE THE BUS, TURN TO PAGE 23.  
IF YOU DECIDE TO ASK HIM OUT, TURN TO PAGE 33.



#### Mexico

In a typical Mexican wedding, the bride is clothed in classic white, and she may don a slim short-sleeved jacket or *bolero* over her gown. This is often in the ornate flamenco style. The groom may choose to wear a matador's outfit instead of the traditional tux. During the ceremony, the couple is wrapped in rosary beads in a figure eight wound around both of their necks to represent their new unification.

In another tradition, the groom will gift his bride 13 gold coins as a symbol of his everlasting trust and devotion. At the reception, guests who wish to dance with the bride must pin a monetary offering to the bride's dress.

#### Germany

Before a German wedding, the bride-to-be will sometimes be "kidnapped" by her bridal party. It is the groom's duty to find her, generally in a pub or nightclub. The night before the actual wedding, an informal party known as a *polterabend* is thrown. Wedding guests bring plates for smashing, which the bride and groom must clean up themselves. This tradition is supposed to bring good luck to the happy couple. At the reception, generally the evening of the wedding, songs are sung and a "newspaper" detailing the wedding is distributed. The wedding night itself is often full of harmless pranks such as filling up the entire hotel room with balloons.

#### Hawaii

During a Hawaiian wedding, the reverend will say a prayer — the Hawaiian Wedding Blessing — before the ceremony. A popular choice for the first dance is the famous Elvis tune, "The Hawaiian Wedding Song," which is usually sung after the ceremony. The bride will don what is called a *holoku*, a billowing white dress, instead of an elaborate gown. In lieu of a veil, she will wear a garland of tropical flowers around her head and one behind her ear. After the ceremony, the bride and groom are congratulated with leis worn around their necks.

#### India

Hindu weddings are often elaborate events. What we in America might consider ostentatious is completely acceptable in Indian culture. The bride wears a ruby red or pink sari, the traditional wedding color. The wedding begins days before the actual ceremony.

At the bridal shower, the bride's family dyes the bride with henna tattoo ink and mustard oil. On the wedding day, the bride's family gathers around her, showers her with rice and touches her feet. The bride and groom are tied together using seven different knots in a length of rope. During the reception, they are then blessed by a Hindu priest with ancient Vedic hymns. At the end, the bride's father "donates" her to her new husband.

#### Israel

As a predominantly Judaic country, Israel's wedding customs often follow this religious tradition. One difference between Jewish and Christian weddings is that the bride and groom are escorted down the aisle by both of their parents. The ceremony generally takes place under a small canopy or *chupah*. The rabbi performing the ceremony recites a blessing over a cup of wine. Then a *ketubah*, or wedding contract, is signed and read aloud by the rabbi. At the end of the ceremony, the husband symbolizes the start of the couple's life together by crushing a sheet of glass underneath his shoe. At the reception, traditional Jewish dances are performed, including "Hava Nagila," and the bride and groom are hoisted into the air on chairs. Due to their religious roots, these traditions are also common in other largely Jewish countries. **R**

WHEN THINGS  
**GO WRONG**  
 SYMPTOMS OF A RELATIONSHIP GONE SOUTH



by Patrick Ogbeide | illustrations by Justyn Iannucci

It's a beautiful Saturday evening, and you've confined yourself to your room. The iPod in the background has been blasting Alanis Morissette's "Ironic" on repeat for 20 minutes, but you don't care, because she's the only one who understands you. Ripped up pictures and broken CD bits lie around you, but why clean them up? It won't won't rekindle your lost love. Nothing can cure your misery, and all you can do is wallow in your sorrow asking, "When did it go wrong?"



**ON THIS EPISODE OF CHEATERS**

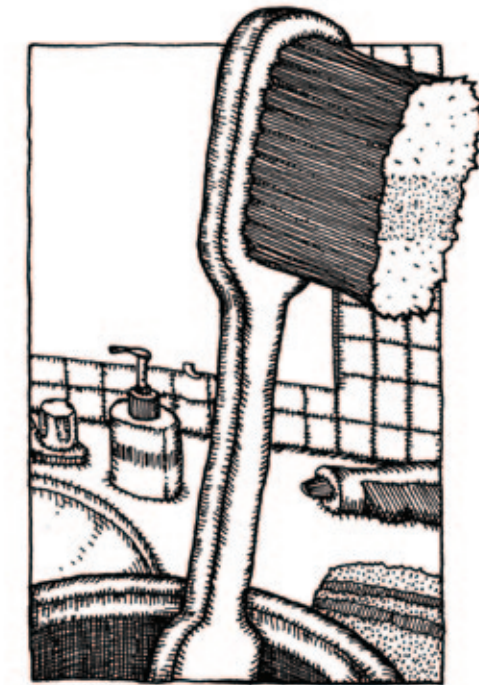
Oftentimes, infidelity becomes the reason for a souring relationship. With cheating, victims often develop a sense of insecurity. Questions such as "Are they prettier?" and "Are they funnier?" begin to arise, adding a sense of inadequacy. When one of life's greatest treasures suddenly vanishes, it's understandable to feel as if the world is collapsing. Perhaps the greatest side effect of cheating is distrust. Once an act of infidelity is exposed, the victim loses all trust in the culprit, which is likely to have a disastrous effect on the relationship.

Regardless of a person's motive for cheating, one thing is certain — it changes the dynamic of a relationship. But that doesn't mean the relationship is doomed; simply addressing the issue could unearth hidden feelings that might cause future problems. You don't need to forget, but you must accept that the situation occurred and attempt to live with it. Time will be the most important factor in recovering a relationship from the grips of infidelity. You aren't going to forgive and forget the first day; it will take weeks to even begin conversing about it, and it will possibly take months to re-establish trust. It is not easy, but it is possible to recover from cheating and form an even stronger bond than before.

**UTTER BOREDOM**

A relationship is a lot like a favorite shirt. You love wearing it over and over again, but after a certain point, wearing it becomes a monotonous chore. Boredom in a relationship is the same way. At first, you spend all your time together, separating only long enough to maintain daily functions. In your few times apart, you fill each other's inboxes with smiley faces and hearts. Time passes, and the routine has finally gotten old. You text less; planning time together becomes more a chore than a luxury; and above all, you start to wonder if it's time for a new shirt.

Re-igniting a stale relationship can be as simple as giving each other space. If you're always together, you aren't giving yourself enough time to process your life's daily occurrences. More time is spent on your partner, creating a sense of obligation rather than enjoyment. Space allows you to return to each another with a refreshed mind and millions of new conversation topics. Even the smallest steps, such as breaking out of simple routines, can be extremely beneficial. Instead of visiting the same old haunts, how about going to a concert or trying foreign cuisine? If you're not a fan of change, then adding some intimacy to the relationship can be a big help. Simple gestures such as kissing or touching each other can rekindle the fire that may have been extinguished by time and complacency.



**0 TO 60 IN 3.5**

Many people have been in relationships that started off like a marathon sprint. You go from saying "hi" to meeting the parents, all without the time to actually build the relationship. While fast-paced relationships work well for many people, they can also set the stage for a breakup. Not everyone is comfortable moving at such an accelerated pace. Some people would much rather prefer taking their time on certain aspects of dating, such as meeting the parents or deciding who gets the top drawer.

There is only one solution for a problematically fast-paced relationship — slow down. You have all the time in the world. Take the time to enjoy the things currently in your relationship, and don't worry too much about what lies ahead. Chances are you won't even realize when those milestones come.

Whatever the reason behind your relationship's problems, nothing is unsolvable. Even the most broken relationship can be re-established through dedication. With a little time, communication and extra understanding, your relationship can go from a bumpy ride to a smooth sail beneath a sunset horizon. **R**

**Five Quick Ways to Get Over Someone**

If you cannot fix the problems in your relationship, the best thing to do is to break it off. However, an unpleasant break-up can leave you feeling miserable and alone. Here are a few quick ways to go from saying, "What went wrong?" to "Onto the next one!"

**THINK POSITIVE THOUGHTS**

The good times aren't always the most apparent after a recently ended relationship, especially during bitter break-ups. If you think about that sweet Kanye concert instead of that bitter argument on the subway, you'll end up realizing some of your own mistakes.

**TALK**

Talking is a great way to recover from a breakup. It allows you to relieve your emotions and address the situation fully. Definitely talk to your close friends or family members about it. Who knows, their advice might help you see things from a different perspective.

**CLEAN**

Clearing your space of anything that reminds you of the relationship is often a good way to move on. If the one area you have control over is relationship problem free, then the rest of your life will follow.

**PARTAKE IN A HOBBY**

Do what you love to do! Engaging in any activity that makes you happy will help you overcome the breakup.

**EMBRACE THE HATE**

Depending on your breakup, you despise your new ex. Instead holding it all in, embracing the anger you feel will speed your recovery process. Anger is an essential emotion and dealing with it will only make things better.

# IN THE SHADOW OF AN UNKNOWN STALKER:

## A Stalker's Story

by Madeleine Villavicencio

The faint sunlight washed over me through the large windows on the second floor of Gosnell Hall. I had never felt so exposed. Time ticked away as I searched for an inconspicuous spot to capture that one perfect picture to add to my growing Gasser file.

Surveying the students as they walked to their classes, I gripped the camera in my coat pocket. Maybe I should have picked a more secluded spot to wait, but it was now too late; I spotted *him* walking down the hallway. I shuffled toward him with my eyes fixed to the floor, and then darted down the adjoining corridor — hoping he hadn't seen me. I waited for a minute or two before peeking around the corner and snapping a few photos. My unfortunate timing and lack of a telephoto lens resulted in poor, blurry images. Rats!

My obsession with David Keith Gasser began weeks before our close encounter in the College of Science. It all started when a **REPORTER** assignment on stalking made it my personal mission to learn everything I could about the six-foot freshman from New Milford, Conn.

Gathering information was no challenge. The combination of **REPORTER** resources, Google and Facebook gave me everything I could have ever needed and more. Not only did I learn that we enjoyed the same television shows, I also acquired

all kinds of contact information. More importantly, however, I learned he lived on the north wing of Engineering House and found a draft of his winter quarter schedule. With phase one complete, I began to construct my plan.

Remembering that David had once written that “Top Gear”’s Jeremy Clarkson “has a voice that I would want to lull me to sleep, encourage me at work, and generally narrate my life,” I created an e-mail address and screen name under the alias “clrknsvoice1221.” I loaded up my Skype account to ensure my calls couldn't be traced, and followed him to class to confirm his schedule. Soon, I was ready to put Operation Secret Stalker into full throttle.

Things quickly escalated from there. Short love notes turned into emails and large posters. Voicemails that started out as hang up calls and heavy breathing evolved into 30-second song samples including Blondie's “I Touch Myself” and proclamations of affection read by Google Translate's “Listen” feature. My erratic efforts became more frequent and more elaborate.

As the experiment wore on, I found myself obsessing over the efficacy of my plan and the details behind it. Questions began to plague my mind: Were my efforts all for naught? Why was he never on AIM? Did he notice me looking into his classroom window or watching him in the

engineering building? The uncertainty of it all had begun to annoy me like an itch I knew I could not scratch. That's when I knew I had a problem.

Becoming a stalker began to take over my life. I spent hours plotting to get everything just right. With each new scheme, I hoped my intentions were blatant enough to provoke a response. I needed to know that my actions were affecting him — that I was indeed fulfilling my assignment. It was this desire that compelled me to take one final step.

Deadline looming, I struck up a conversation with David to discover whether or not he had unraveled the mystery behind his secret admirer. Through a casual conversation, I determined that I was not on his list of suspects. I had been successful in making my presence known while remaining anonymous.

My mission now complete, I breathed a sigh of relief. With this article's publication, both parties will leave relatively unscathed. And here is where a key distinction lies: for me, the compulsion ends here. The revelation of my identity brings this experiment to a close, but when a real stalker emerges from the shadows, the situation may take a turn for the worse.

**Editor's Note:** Stalking is a crime and should not be taken lightly. If you are being stalked, don't hesitate to ask for help. If you are in immediate danger, please call Public Safety at 585.475.3333.

WERE MY EFFORTS ALL FOR NAUGHT? WHY WAS HE NEVER ON AIM? DID HE NOTICE ME LOOKING INTO HIS CLASSROOM WINDOW OR WATCHING HIM IN JAMES E. GLEASON HALL (GLE, 9)? THE UNCERTAINTY OF IT ALL HAD BEGUN TO ANNOY ME LIKE AN ITCH I KNEW I COULD NOT SCRATCH. THAT'S WHEN I KNEW I HAD A PROBLEM.

## Leave The Bus

It takes you about 15 minutes to walk to the Stumbling Monk. Outside, the tainted wench waits for you, a clove cigarette jammed crookedly between her lips. She looks astounding. She leers at you the entire time you approach. Once inside, she immediately starts to guzzle down wine. There is something fascinating about her. She appears to possess every available unattractive quality. The waiter arrives, and your date scoffs, “Make me a sandwich,” cackles at her own cleverness, and asks if she can have Cocoa Puffs. The more her mouth rampages, the less you pay attention. After 35 excruciating minutes of sitting at a table with the Cocoa Puff-gnoshing beast of a woman, the girl confesses, “I always wanted to marry into health insurance. You look like a keeper.” You get up to leave. The girl hisses, “Not so fast. You forgot to pay.” You think to yourself, “What a lovely Valentine's Day.”

## A Victim's Tale

by David Keith Gasser | illustration by Griffin Moore

I rolled over in aggravation to a ringing at my bedside. Stumbling with the buttons on my phone, I turned off what I thought was my alarm and stood up. I looked over at my clock — it read 2:16 a.m. Confused, I turned back to the phone and realized I had actually silenced a phone call. It beeped to announce the presence of a message. I looked back at my clock in disbelief and saw it turn over to 2:17 a.m.

This stalker business was *not* as much fun as I had imagined. Somehow, I had pictured something more akin to a James Bond film with lots of action, mystique and perhaps even a little romance. Not these poorly timed phone calls and the odd understanding of my schedule. I'm a busy guy and end up going all over campus, yet somehow my stalker always seemed to know where I was, even though I knew nothing of them.

That was definitely the eeriest part, not knowing. Hell, I didn't even know if my stalker was male or female, or whether or not they had started stalking me. Sure, in “real life,” a stalking

victim doesn't know when they're being stalked, either. However, knowing from a **REPORTER** assignment that someone was definitely going to stalk me made the anticipation a factor to deal with.

Once I knew it had begun — a note mysteriously stuck to the back of my coat was a big hint — I found myself constantly on alert. Sitting down in Erdle Commons before Writing Seminar, I couldn't get anywhere near relaxed. Every time I'd grow engrossed in my reading, I'd suddenly recall that someone might be watching. Looking up, I'd scan those nearby and see if anyone seemed to be out of place. If a passerby strode too close to me or my belongings, I'd look up, startled, and check for more “presents.”

Soon, the phone calls weren't limited to just interrupting my sleep. Professor Chris Wahle and the entirety of section 6 of Differential Equations can attest to this, as apparently my unknown stalker could not wait until after class to call and inform me that I was the “cutest thing ever.” Confused by the untraceable number, I listened to the message, and promptly failed

to learn anything about Laplace Transforms for the remainder of class, entirely caught up in watching both the door behind me and the windows to my left.

The most horrifying revelation during this ordeal was a simple, but far from innocent, e-mail from my stalker. They had gotten some good pictures of me in Golisano, they wrote. I remembered taking a less-than-dignified nap in Computer Science that day, and I was horrified. It became worse as a thousand imaginary scenarios popped into my head, with the possibility of photographic proof. What if I had picked my nose earlier in the week? What if I was drooling during the nap? The possibilities, and the unknown, were almost too much to bear.

After this endeavor I can say with confidence that stalking is not cool. Sure, I had a couple laughs on occasion, but I knew it was an experiment. Even then, I felt paranoia claw at me constantly. It also became more apparent where the line between “romantic” and “creepy” should be drawn.

A poster with an image of my face, declaring “David Gasser! Be Mine!” hung in the elevator lounge of my floor? *Creepy.* **R**



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# addicted TO YOU

by Kristen Maslanka | illustration by Lilia Pikulyak

The pitter patter of rain crashes in my head, barraging me like her last words, “I think it’s better if we end this.” Those were the words that would come to define the next year of my existence, a futile attempt to win her back. A desperate attempt to cry out for help; the loneliness consuming, the memories haunting. *I just want her back.*

If you’ve ever dealt with a breakup, those words were probably applicable to you. Perhaps not in so many words, perhaps in more; but you were never alone during that crushing experience. Literature, films, paintings and songs alike strive to capture the ghost of a breakup, the phenomenon of unrequited love and unresolved emotion. Those artists have all been in that same empty place in life, and there is no doubt others were in that place the same time you were. But it never feels like enough.

A July 2010 study in the “Journal of Neurophysiology” was conducted to analyze the neural conditions of the brain following an intense breakup. Subjects, ranging in age from 18 to 21, admitted to still being “in-love” with their ex. They were each shown a picture of their significant other, then given a math problem to solve. A moment later, they were shown a separate picture of an acquaintance they felt no attraction towards and were given a different problem to solve. The case found brain activity in similar areas to those in the brains of cocaine withdrawal patients.

When in love, we crave the other person. We plan our days to accommodate spending time together. Scientists would consider these behaviors to be symptoms of addiction, calling them “mood swings, craving, obsession, compulsion, distortion of reality, emotional dependence, personality changes, risk-taking, and loss of self-control.” Sound familiar? Each of these symptoms of love is notably congruous with that of a cocaine addiction.

Furthermore, the reactions to the neutral stimulus — in this case, the neutral photograph — helped scientists suggest possible healing methods for the pain of a rough breakup. When shown



the neutral images directly after the photograph of the beloved, the study stated that the subjects showed distinct signs of calming down.

Why this happens isn’t entirely clear. It’s possible that the subjects associate the image of another person with someone who can comfort them. Or that the neutral image “replaced” the stressful one in their brain, removing it from active thought. Whatever the reason, the reaction is important in discovering a healing process.

Adding to the comparison, it seems that while the areas activated during a breakup mimic withdrawal, the activation of the same area that one experiences during the “high” was experienced in love interactions. This study is helping contribute to the idea that not only can you be addicted, and therefore suffer physical and emotional withdrawal from a breakup, but you can also “get high” from romantic interactions.

The similarities between cocaine addiction and love are extremely helpful in deciphering just what it is in humans that attract us to others, despite the risks. The study suggests that break-ups are involved with the reward gain or loss system, an extremely important function of our emotions.

Love is a complex thing. Science has tried to understand such a fundamental human emotion for years. Researchers are developing technology beyond our wildest dreams, yet understanding love is still beyond it. This study is one step on the way to understanding love, but we are still miles away. Love

is, quite simply, intangible. It is the ecstasy of being with another who completes you; it is the addiction. **R**

*If you or someone you know is feeling depressed or suicidal, the counseling center is there to help and can be reached at 585.475.2261.*



### Order Roasted Cucumber with Traumatic Hummus

The cashier rings you up for \$2.14 and you head over to an empty seat. You bite into the roasted cucumber and it oozes a cakey green substance. Suddenly, the smell of fermented goat urine smacks you in the face and you start to gag. You frantically push the tray away and try to flush the taste from your mouth with a bite of traumatic hummus. But it expands in your throat and is so viscous you can hardly breathe. You try to let out a scream, but it only amounts to a mottled grunt from your clogged esophagus. You pound violently on the table in hopes that someone will see you, but the blaring music drowns out your attempts at communication. You writhe and twitch in a dizzy fit, gasping for air. You take your last soggy, disgusting breath in a pile of traumatic hummus.



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## Word On The Street

What is the craziest thing  
you've done for love?

by Jonathan Foster

### FAWAZ ALSHAMMARI

TELECOMMUNICATIONS ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY  
FIRST YEAR

"I went to an English speaking school on a scholarship;  
I left my business for the love of my family."



### CHELSEA HUBBARD

MEDICAL ILLUSTRATION  
FIRST YEAR

"I was asked out over Instant Messenger."

### MICHAEL YOUNG

GAME DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT  
FIRST YEAR

"I jumped into a swimming pool naked."

### BECKY GERHART

PSYCHOLOGY  
FIRST YEAR

"I haven't done anything." 



### Stay Where You Are

"Sit down," he insists. "I have a confession." You squirm. "I saw you out there looking at the animals. You seemed so sad, so peaceful. I wanted to find out more about you." He strolls towards you and shuts the door behind you, lingering for an uncomfortable few seconds. Then it begins. He confesses everything, from his love of raw kiwis to having read the "Twilight" books at least eight times each. He asks whether you think Kristen Stewart is plumping up, and whether you've ever made love in a petrified forest. He is convinced that he is connecting with you on a meaningful level. At the end, he gushes, "This is the best date I've ever had. I think I love you," and puckers his lips at you. You sprint out of his office and make it safely to your car. Valentine's Day would not be promising this year.



# { VDAY } 2011

## THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES



**VDAY** is a global movement to stop violence against women. Each year the RIT Center for Women and Gender hosts a performance to promote awareness for **VDAY** and support the end of violence against women.

### Performances

**Friday Feb. 11 and Saturday Feb. 12**  
**8:00 PM, Ingle Auditorium**

**\$5.00 Students**

**\$8.00 Faculty**

**\$8.00 General Public**

Buy your tickets at: The Center for Women and Gender, Bytes on the Run, NTID SDC/SLT room 1200, or at the door on your night of choice

Interpreters provided upon request subject to availability. Please go to: <https://www.ntid.rit.edu/accessservices/index.cfm> if you need the services of a sign language interpreter.



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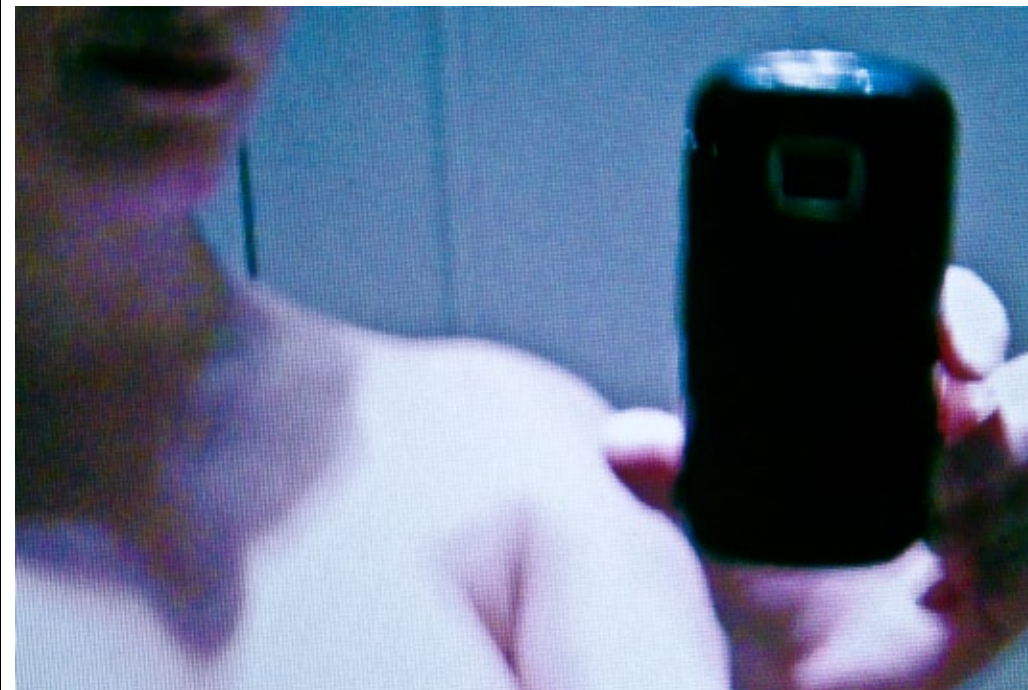


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# Sexting

by Christina Belisle | photograph by Robert Bredvad



Sexting is a practice in which participants send sexually explicit text messages, pictures, videos, instant messages or emails. It's one of the more modern ways for tech-savvy members of the dating scene to attract potential mates; a way to use your best (or worst) language to show that you can talk the talk, and maybe have the body to match.

The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy in partnership with "CosmoGirl" surveyed teens' sexual electronic activity. Twenty percent of all teens (participants aged 13 to 19) said they had sent or posted images or videos of themselves, while the number rose to 33 percent for young adults (participants aged 20 to 26). Sexual texts or instant messages jumped to 39 percent of teens and 59 percent of young adults. While the majority of these messages were for boyfriends or girlfriends, 15 percent of these messages were sent to people the participants only knew over the internet.

The main problem that sexters face is rooted in the very technology they use to send their explicit messages. Once a file makes it onto the internet, it's impossible for you to retain control of it. A cell phone photo can be uploaded to Facebook or forwarded to other phones, and there's no way to limit where it ends up. This is common knowledge, but people

still take the risk, oftentimes with disastrous consequences. Vanessa Hudgens of "High School Musical" fame found this out the hard way when a naked picture of herself spread across the internet in 2007, damaging her reputation. Similarly, actress Anna Faris accidentally sent a sext to her father instead of her husband last year.

Amongst adults, sexting is mostly viewed as racy, but not dangerous. If the subject of a racy image is underage, the law tends to get involved. A 16-year-old boy in Rochester, for example, could get up to seven years in prison because he forwarded a picture of his naked 15-year-old girlfriend to some of his friends. Since she was under the age of 18, the picture was considered child pornography, and because he gave the picture to other people, it counted as distribution. This puts law enforcement in a difficult position, because the law makes no distinction between adults distributing pictures of children and a child distributing pictures of themselves. This causes problems when the picture is distributed on the web, where it's easy for the victim and the perpetrator to be the same person. It's even possible to find yourself a federal felon if the pictures pop up on phones across state lines.

Some sites such as Facebook and Twitter delete

“  
The main problem that sexters face is rooted in the very technology they use to send their explicit messages.  
”

sexually explicit images as part of its privacy policy, but not all sites have this in place, especially the countless sites dedicated to ex-girlfriends and images sent via sexting.

Even if the files never leave the recipient's phone, this doesn't keep the phone from being passed around or from someone stealing it. No one can predict if their phone will be lost or stolen.

Sexting can be a racy way to surprise your lover in the middle of the day, or as a way to tease a long-distance fling. However, it can also give cyber bullies ammo to harass or embarrass you, and you never know where those messages will end up. **B**

### Attend His Reception

You meander down to the Chaotic Slacker Art Gallery. The gallery is located on Stadt Street and overlooks a park in the middle of the city. Your veins pulse with excitement as you listen to the electric clicks of the insects. You have a good feeling about tonight. When you reach the gallery, the door is locked. You ring the bell. There's no response. Checking the time, you walk around the building to see if there is a back entrance. You find it, but it too is locked. After about a minute of knocking, a bald man with goggle-shaped glasses peers through the window at the front door and mouths, slowly, "Go. Away." He rolls his eyes and laughs in your face. You throw your hands up in exasperation. Angry and alone, you walk back home through the park, past a cuddling couple. "Happy Valentine's Day," one says, nodding to you.





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# PONDERING PLURALITY

## NON-TRADITIONAL MARRIAGES IN THE SPOTLIGHT



by Chris Zubak-Skees  
illustration by Amber Gartung

On HBO it's "Big Love," on TLC it's "Sister Wives," and on Fox it's the latest episode of "Bones." It seems you can't swing a dead cat without hitting a TV polygamist. Polygamy, the practice of having more than one spouse, has become the latest pop culture fodder for a nation diverted by social scandal.

The cameras focus on what might be termed normalized polygamy. Bill Henrickson, the lead actor in the scripted "Big Love," is married to three women who live in three adjoining houses. The wives are adults who consented to the arrangement and, aside from the occasional feud, get along and support each other well. Henrickson divides his time between them, their flock of children, and the small business he runs. "Officially, I love you all the same," he tells his newest and most curious wife.

The family in "Sister Wives," a reality show, follows much the same pattern. The wives are occasionally jealous, but the family unit functions as a whole. And although the plural marriage in the latest episode of "Bones" ends in divorce, poisoning, cheating and murder, it all seems normal enough, at least for "Bones." There is nothing immediately objectionable or overwhelmingly sinister in the ideal of plural marriage as portrayed on the small screen. Yet, there remains a dark side.

Since the Mormon Church officially banned polygamy in 1890, a number of fundamentalist sects have splintered off into numerous polygamist enclaves whose members number in the tens of thousands. Although officially illegal, their plural marriages are almost never prosecuted, except as a tool to combat more severe crimes. The leader of one fundamentalist sect, Warren Steed Jeffs, proves the rule. He was charged as an accomplice to rape for sanctioning underage marriages, and his sect was tarred with a similar brush.

It's difficult to tell from a distance whether Henrickson or Jeffs is the norm, but, for the sake of discussion, let's say it's Henrickson. Child rape is universally detested, but normalized polygamous marriage is harder to judge, and it does have proponents.

One website, pro-polygamy.com, declares: "Freely-consenting, adult, non-abusive, marriage-committed polygamy is the next civil rights battle." Put aside the long list of conditions for a moment, and consider whether they have a point.

The current civil rights battle is being pitched over gay rights, most notably gay marriage. A handful of states have legalized gay marriage, and although it remains unpopular on ballot initiatives, nobody seems to be able to muster a cohesive argument against it. One claim is that gay marriage will harm the definition of marriage, but nobody has been able to articulate what that means or why we should care. Scenarios as ludicrous as men marrying sheep have been, in all seriousness, trotted out in support.

Polygamy, however, provides a more realistic test. If we disregard traditional marriage's insistence on opposite sexes, could we also disregard the insistence on one partner?

One immediate concern: the gay movement achieved moral victory by stressing commitment. Two partners committed to each other should not be kept apart, they said. Whether polygamists can martial the same heart-warming moral weaponry is an open question. They're just as committed, they would argue, but in a three- or four- or — what the heck —

five-way division of affection, that commitment is spread thin. Still, if enough polygamists say it with enough conviction, it might just stick.

Here, then, the fragility of traditional marriage becomes apparent. It's a social construct retained through religious fervor, cultural inertia and the hope that nobody blinks. But millions find marriage lacking, and the result is often divorce. Jealousy, instability, abuse, financial problems and a hundred other ills plague traditional marriages. Perhaps polygamists' strongest argument would be to ask, "Is plural marriage any worse?" **R**

### Make A Dash For It

You spin around like a hallucinating panther and make a dash for the exit. Frantically, you try to find the gates leading to the parking lot. You zoom past a chain-link fence and part of your shirt rips. The irate cries of zoo employees chase after you. You meet a wall, and the fence's mesh quivers around you. Frightened, you swivel around and see the pyromascara girl. You're completely caged in. Defeated, you hold your head and sit on the panda-scented dirt, awaiting your demise.



## a DEAD TRADITION

by Christina Belisle | photograph by Joi Ong



The word “chivalry” is derived from the French word *chevalerie*, which comes from the word for a mounted warrior. The word “chivalry” evokes images of knights in shining armor assisting fair maidens, gentlemen in suits helping ladies out of a carriage, and dashing men taking their dates out to fancy restaurants. However, this is no longer the case.

Both men and women have jobs and cars, so one gender shouldn't be expected to go out of their way for the other. This is especially true for college students, most of whom carry some financial burden. If the girl just happens to have an extra meal option at the end of the week, who says that she can't buy her date dinner at The Commons?

Even beyond college and in the professional world, men and woman are treated as equals. Since each party is financially and physically capable of taking the other out, there is no reason (other than a dated view on romance) for the

man to be expected to take care of everything.

Women were once treated differently than men and viewed as the “fairer sex.” Men would first step into a bus to help a woman up and then off of it to help her down. Any modern commuter knows how unlikely it is for a passenger to offer up his seat for a girl, let alone help one on or off.

Chivalry is gone partly because manners are becoming a dying breed. It's this new mentality of: Why should I hold a door open for the person behind me if the person in front didn't? With people constantly on the go, common courtesies such as “please” and “thank you” have been forgotten and along with them, the idea that one should treat others with respect.

When people do exhibit nice manners, they do so for everyone, not just for the “fairer sex.” Holding the door open is considered polite if done for anyone, no matter the age or gender. The same is true with giving up your seat for

someone or sharing an umbrella. Our modern society no longer dictates that we have to treat women differently simply because of their gender. With changing times and views on gender, chivalry is dead.



### Decline His Gesture and QTFO

You decide to be blunt. “I can't. I'm quite busy. I apologize.” He stares your way, expressionless. The silence is excruciating. Then, he swiftly turns around and stampedes towards his desk. His backside resembles a murderous rhinoceros. You begin to panic.

IF YOU DECIDE TO MAKE A DASH FOR IT, TURN TO PAGE 31.  
IF YOU DECIDE TO STAY WHERE YOU ARE, TURN TO PAGE 27.

## a LIVING PRACTICE

by Alecia Crawford | photograph by Joi Ong

“A real lady always carries a purse!” Being an impressionable eight-year-old, I engraved that in my brain and never looked back. I spent nearly the first 16 years of my life in the south where everyone is expected to look presentable. Elders were greeted with “mister” or “misses” and gentlemen always opened doors for a lady.

In the Middle Ages, knights had various written decrees, called chivalry, that they were required to follow. Chivalry is defined as “the sum of the ideal qualifications of a knight, including courtesy, generosity, valor, and dexterity in arms.” To be chivalrous in those days, a knight had to be loyal to their king and not abuse their social standing in the caste system. And while the caste system has since faded, chivalry certainly hasn't. For years, gentlemen have used chivalrous acts, such as giving a lady his coat or pulling out her dinner chair, to court the opposite sex. While courting has changed over time, chivalry still exists, if only with a faint pulse.

I don't blame men, the feminist movement or gender equality for the disappearing art of chivalry. I blame us ladies. Aside from a man holding the door, a lot of girls aren't used to chivalrous acts. While it is fair to blame music videos, fashion magazines and other mass media outlets for damaging the self-esteem of women (leading a girl to be disrespectful of her own self), the fault ultimately falls on the victim. Make him open the door, make him court you; make him see you for the lady that you are! When a guy is trying to date you, he often tries to impress you. Although a guy giving chivalry a chance may be awkward at first, a girl should still be appreciative of his thoughtful gestures as they show respect for both himself and the woman. There are some social norms in place that still occur such as the guy defending the girl's honor or the necessary respectable first impression for your mate's parents. While meeting the parents is a serious move, it's the thought behind those actions that matter.

Chivalry may have been considered sexist back in the Middle Ages when women were not regarded as equals, but today, it is universal. The concept of the “fairer sex” doesn't even exist anymore. Yes, I like doors opened for me, chairs pulled for me, and being given my date's jacket on a cool summer night; I'm not ashamed of my traditional upbringing. Although I prefer male to female chivalrous actions, the roles can easily be reversed. Whichever way chivalry is occurring, it shows courteousness, thoughtfulness and respect to those around you. And as long as there is one person out there who is polite to their fellow gentlemen and gentlewomen, chivalry shall live on. **B**



### Ask Him Out

“Would you be interested in grabbing coffee sometime?” you say, and, embarrassedly, think to yourself that you may as well just have asked for sex outright. His face seems to glimmer with a promising response, and you instantly shed all doubt. “I would love to,” he responds. “Are you free this Monday? That's my only day off.” Relief sweeps over you. You remember the sloths at the zoo, so haphazardly in love, and no longer feel alone. You become dizzy at the thought of your future Valentine's Day. The dead body sways, peacefully, as the bus glides onward.



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love my **Cupcake**  
Princess.  
Meow Meow.

Elyse.  
Damn  
you  
puppy chow  
you're  
gonna  
be a hot  
snack for  
some bulldog.

Chantal

THEY SAY LOVE  
IS LIKE AN EARTHQUAKE:  
UNPREDICTABLE,  
A LITTLE SCARY,  
BUT WHEN THE HARD PART IS OVER  
YOU REALIZE HOW  
**LUCKY**  
YOU TRULY ARE.

HAPPY VALENTINES DAY,  
BRANDON MICALE.  
**I LOVE YOU.**

dearest  
**OLIVIA,  
LEO,  
LINDSAY,  
JENA**

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE  
FOR MY HAPPINESS.  
**I LOVE YOU.**  
so incredibly much.

xoxo  
**CASSIE**

**Dan,**  
You are the  
best  
poor  
life  
decision  
I have ever made.

ARRH.  
**I LOVE  
YOU LIKE  
THE STARS  
ABOVE.**  
ALWAYS.

Hey  
Doug Flutie,  
Put  
it in the  
**booty!**

Taylor  
Simpson,  
You  
turn my  
software  
into **hardware.**  
Love, Sando