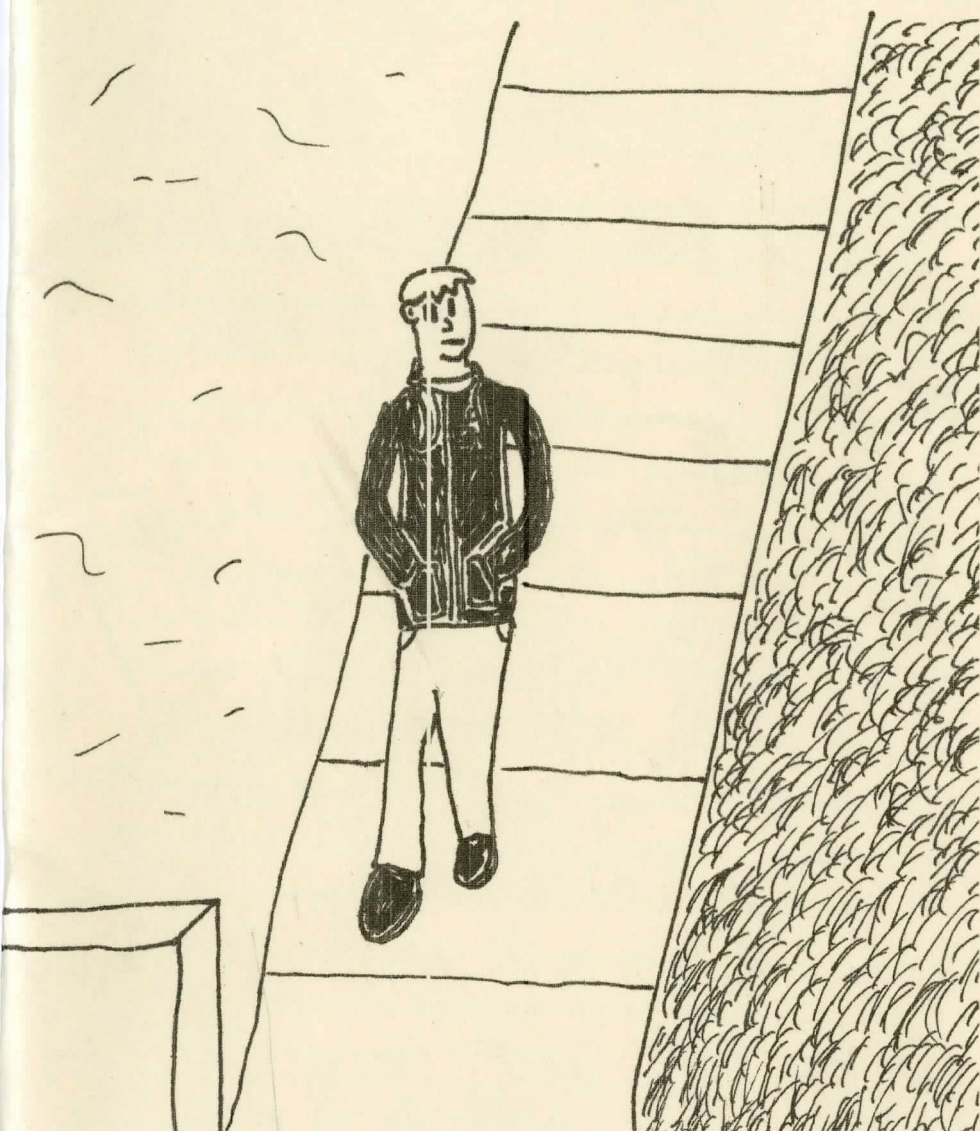


# Button Masher

(On no real schedule yet) #1



## Button Masher #1

Price(s): Please e-mail for info

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Size: 5.5 x 8.5

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Contact info: Please e-mail

\* ~~Joe WSTK~~ for any/all info. \* JoeWSTK@yahoo.com

Thank you,  
Joe Evans

Hi,

Thanks for reading the first issue of Button Masher. Just to get it out of the way, heres the deal: For the Most part, Button Masher is an ongoing fiction story, with each issue being its own little episode of events - sometimes funny stuff happens, sometimes theres crazy drama stuff, hopefully its always interesting. Plus, theres some ~~poorly~~ drawn comics as an added bonus.

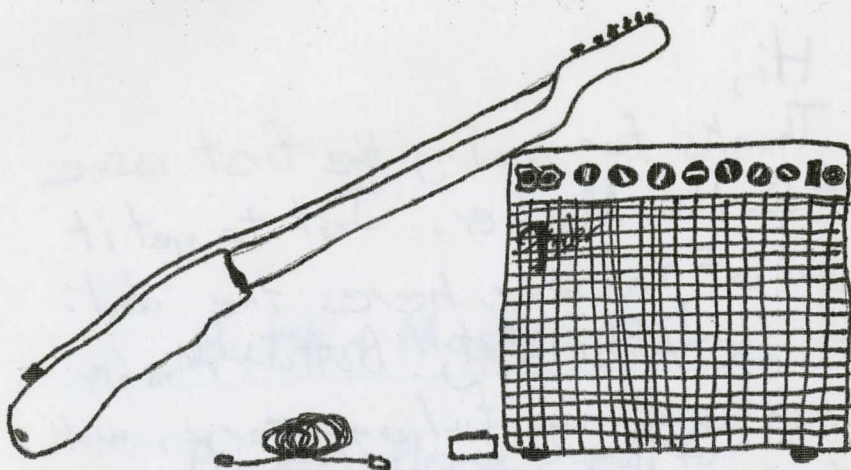
I actually think this one's shorter then what I expect of future issues, but I guess well see. I just thought about it one day, and said "I just want to **DO** it already"

E-mail me at Thanks,  
JoeWSTK@yahoo.com - I ♥ e-mail) Joe



## Episode 1: Episode 1

(Is not a fuck you episode).



We were all standing around, watching the band play, and I enjoyed it, very much. It wasn't just because of the music, since I was used to seeing bands play on a regular basis, for a number of years now. But it didn't hurt. It was just nice being together with all of my friends again, whom I really hadn't seen in a while now. There were people whom I lived with, both practically and literally. Over the past two years we'd all spent so much time together, and I considered them family, people who I'd be involved with for the rest of my life. However, like everything else, all things came to an end, and this was no exception, as everyone slowly began to move on. They finished school, or found new jobs, or new places to live which we hadn't yet destroyed.

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7  
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The thing was, I just wasn't ready to accept it, not just yet. It felt like I'd waited so long for something like this, to have it already be over, just like that. I always knew deep inside that things would eventually have to change, I just wasn't ready for it, not just yet. I needed just a little more time together with everyone; a few more unnaturally nice days, late nights, quiet relaxed times, or at least one final blowout, worthy of its own television special, commercial free.

This is what I told her, her being my girlfriend. Actually, I was never completely sure what our official boyfriend/girlfriend status was, even after all the time spent together and everything else we'd been through. Either way, this is what I told her as we stood in the crowded, noisy living room. She reminded me that life has a funny way of working out. For example, even though we may not see our friends as often as we'd like to anymore, we would still see them every now and again, and when we do, we don't really focus on the rest of the time anymore. Then she kissed me, which was an out of nowhere surprise, because we always kept a really low profile when it came to that stuff, but right then and there, everything seemed perfect, even if just for a second.



Episode 1: Episode 1  
(Is not a fuck you episode)

**"AAAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!"**

Then I woke up.

I struggled to hit the alarm, even though it was playing one of my favorite records. I managed to turn it off, and just laid there in bed, still fully clothed from the night before, on about three hours of sleep, amongst piles of clothes, notebooks, regular books, as well as everything else I was storing on my bed for whatever reason. It didn't matter if I'd suddenly just been given just the right advice I so desperately needed, it was just a dream. Enlightened or not, it wasn't good enough for me anymore, and I simply closed my eyes and went back to sleep in the crowded bed.

It was several more hours later before I woke up again. There were no alarms this time, just the feeling that I could not remain in the exact same spot for any longer, covered in the sweat that comes from merely existing, not to mention the feeling that I could not possibly sleep any longer. But, I still decided to give it another twenty minutes or so before actually doing anything else. After finally getting out of bed, I noticed a nearby chair (which could very well have fallen from my bed), and sat back down, and closed my eyes for a second (I like to change things up every now and again).

Suddenly, the interrogation began. "Yo, don't you have class or something bro?" The question came from my current roommate, who was also sharing his bed, only with a girl, as opposed to my pile of junk. He'd invited her over from somewhere, either home or a class or in town, but I didn't really care. I personally would have thought it couldn't be any more apparent you were a dick by trying to be your typical college macho frat boy wannabe, who has in fact, said out loud "Dude, I need some VAGINA!", but I guess that's just me. I suppose I'm just different like that.

It was obvious that I didn't have any classes I needed to be going to, on account that it was Saturday, but that didn't stop him from trying to get me out of our cramped room. Even if it was a stupid question, I have to admit that I was shocked that he was even making an attempt to get me out at all.

There was no clear choice for what to do. On one hand, I wanted to stay, just for spite's sake, because I really didn't want him to "win". Then again, on the other hand, I really didn't want to stay there, even if I was by myself, let alone with him there. There weren't many options, so I did the only honorable thing; I picked up my bag, and walked to the door. As I headed out, I announced "I'm going out for a while, I don't know how long. Oh yeah, and try not to piss in your closet again like the other night." And on that note, I left.



Despite my eagerness to leave, I didn't actually have anywhere to go, so I simply wandered around town. I walked up and down the streets, paying little attention to my actual surroundings. Instead I thought back, reminiscing about happier times in my mind. It was nice for a minute, until I realized that I really wasn't in the mood to do that at all.

I decided that since I would most likely be spending the day wasting my time anyway, that I might as well try to waste someone else's time too. I made my way over to Dave's apartment. Dave was my friend, and one of my old roommates. It was nearing 1:30 in the afternoon, so I was hoping to catch him just as he was waking up

Dave's a "graphic designer". I say that because as far as I know, all he does is work on his computer, and then stays up really late watching cartoons while managing to get drunk off the same cheap beer he's been drinking heavily for years. He goes to sleep late, wakes up even later, and then repeats the whole thing, every day.

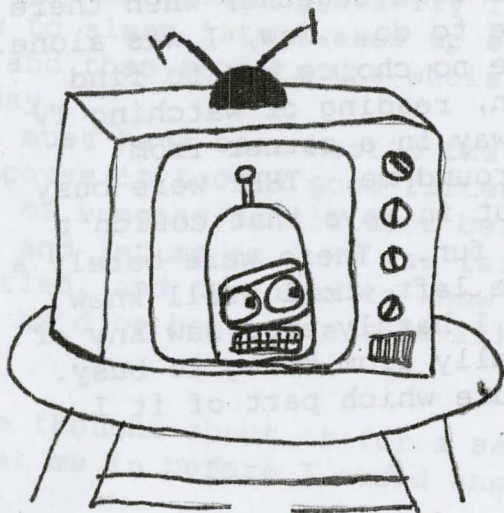
It must have been hectic the previous day, because it took a good fifteen minutes of banging on his door before he woke up and let me in. He was fairly disgruntled, and demanded to know why I thought he'd be home at a time like now.

Then he thought about it for a second, and just let me in before I could answer.

Initially, we did not stay for long, deciding instead to go to a diner to get something to eat. We arrived and were seated, where we went on to order such a mess of food between the two of us that it could not possibly be considered breakfast, lunch, or dinner, or even brunch for that matter. Dave asked how school had been going for the new year, and I told him that I hated it, and pointed out that the button on his shirt was in the worst possible place. He told me that I was probably just being stubborn and difficult like usual, and that I watch way to much television. I told him how so much had changed, and how I now completely loathed one of the few places that felt like a home to me. He told me that all in all, it was the same place it had always been, but he was wrong. Before, I lived in a community. Everyone knew each other, and was at least friendly to each other. We all went to each others parties, we cooked for each other, and we went along with every ridiculous, made up on the spot game to pass the time together when there was nothing else to do. Now, I was alone. Now I would have no choice but to find solace on my own, reading or watching TV while huddled away in a corner from everyone else around me. THEY were busy being stupid, but in ways that couldn't even possibly be fun. There were barely a handful of people left who I still knew and trusted, and I hardly ever saw any of them anyway, usually from being to busy. I still wasn't sure which part of it I hated the most.



Dave reminded me that it was still possible to actually try to go out of my way to make new friends, but I wasn't buying it. In my mind, I was too fond of my old friends to just disregard them like that. I didn't want NEW friends, I wanted MY friends. Even if things were to start getting better, they wouldn't be the same, and that made me sad. Worst of all it seemed as if no one else understood what the real problem I had with everything was, and that also made me sad. We continued on, eating our food and debating other various topics, which really had no point to them. We finished up and headed back to Dave's apartment, but I still didn't stay for very long. He was going to shower, and I knew that would take a while so I said I was going for another walk, and would return after he'd finished up.



I began to wander around town again. This time I was slightly more willing to reminisce to myself about the past. Only slightly, but still more willing regardless. I thought back to all the stuff like the wiffle ball game which quickly became a wiffle bat fight. The time we went bobsledding with the old mattresses we'd found, and there wasn't even any snow. It wasn't always just about being senseless and crazy though, for every soda can and bottle fight, there was at least one night where we would all relax together. We could just sit around, eating pizza and watching the same television reruns we'd already watched so many times before. The more I thought about it, I just couldn't help but see something funny about how the simple act of sitting around and watching television could seem so pitiful when you're alone, but feel so enjoyable while amongst your friends. I made my way back to Dave's, where he still let me in, despite still not having finished showering yet. So of course, I walked over to his couch, sat down, and began watching television, by myself.



Shortly after finishing his shower, Dave decided that trying to talk to me was a lost cause, and suggested that we play video games to take my mind off things. We sat around for a while longer, our main form of communicating being nothing but shouting profanity back and forth at each other. I was still thinking about school in the back of my mind though, which kept my mood at melancholy at best. I'd been thinking about how things were going, and how they weren't going to be the same anymore, yet here I was, still there, hoping that they would still go back somehow, but it was impossible. I'd decided that the only viable solution would be to make a change, and take a risk and do something different. At this point, I couldn't be any more miserable, but I figured I'd come up with a way that at the very least, I could be miserable with some more privacy.

"I think I'm going to move back in with my parents."

"Really?" Dave seemed shocked.

"Yeah, I think so. Why is that such a surprise?"

"Well, for starters, you'd said that the whole reason you went to college in the first place was to get away from your parents."

Dave did have a point. My initial motivation for going to college wasn't even for my own education, but for the sole purpose to get the opportunity to move out of my house in the first place. I usually argued a lot with my parents back then, so I was looking forward for a chance to get away for a while. Granted, both home and school were both filled with their own forms of insanity, but they were different types of insanity, and the later choice didn't bother me as much. But again, that feeling had changed from what it was two years ago. Maybe it was everyone else, or maybe it really was just me, but for now I liked to think that it was everyone else.

"It can't be to bad," I said. "It seems like we've been getting along much better now that I haven't been home as much now."



"But what about all the arguments? What about the time you got yelled at because they thought you lost the cigarette lighter from your car, when THEY lost it. Especially considering you don't even smoke."

"Yeah, but it's just not the same here."

"That's what you keep saying, you're probably just overly cynical about everything, even for you."

"Dude. My roommate pissed. In his CLOSET."

"Ok, you have a point."

I tend to worry when people actually agree with me.

Dave agreed to help me move out, so we got started immediately in order to get it all done over what was left of the weekend. There really wasn't that much to do, as all my stuff consisted mainly of some clothes, records, and books. Luckily, by now it was late enough in the day that my jackass roommate had already gone out for the night, despite it still being light out. Either way, I was just happy that I didn't have to deal with anything else, like having to talk to him.

All we really had to do was load all my stuff into Dave's car for one trip, which was impressive since his car wasn't big by any means. It wasn't as bad since most of my stuff was already at his apartment anyway, since I had preferred spending time there over the past few months. In all honesty, I actually have a car of my own, but I hadn't been using it because I hated driving unless I absolutely had to. Everything that I needed was in a reasonable walking or biking distance, so I never bothered most of the time. I was working on getting things together, as well as thinking about all sorts of other stuff in my head, when I suddenly heard someone at my door.

"Hey you."

We were about halfway through when my friend Kathleen walked in. I knew Kathleen because she lived with my girlfriend (The one who I was never actually sure if she was my girlfriend or not, that one) since her first year of school. Kathleen would talk to me about her, after noticing how stupid I'd get around her, constantly warning me to be careful, saying she didn't want to see me get hurt, and that I probably shouldn't be spending so much time hanging out with her, but I did anyway. It's not that I'm some sort of bad dude or anything, I just have a tendency to ignore the majority of advice that people give me.



Naturally, Kathleen was a bit confused about why most of my stuff was gone.

"I'm moving out," I told her.

"What? Since when?"

"Around late this afternoon."

"Where are you going to go?"

"Nothing fancy, just back home."

"But why? You hated it there."

"And that's why I left there in the first place. Now I hate it here, so that's why I'm leaving here."

"But you love it here. You would go on and on about what you were going to do for each year while you were here."

"But that's changed now. Now it's as if everyone's gone. Before I was actually living with my friends, but now it's as if everyone I knew is gone. So far this year, I've been surrounded by more people than ever, and yet I've never felt so lonely in all of my life. I think that's a pretty bad sign."

"Yeah, but I'm still here."

"Yeah, but when was the last time I saw you before now? We haven't hung out together like we used to even once this year."

At this point, I was starting to get myself depressed again, because I was reminding myself I really didn't hang out with anyone, or really enjoy anything the way I used to anymore.

"So that's it, you're leaving just like that?"

"Well, I'm still going to school, it's not like I'm dropping out, I'm just moving back home. At least this way I'll have a room to myself."

No one ever seemed to understand just why I'd been so depressed lately, and Kathleen was no exception, I didn't see any use in arguing my point, because every time that things made complete sense to me, someone else always had to tell me why I was wrong. It's ok, I'm used to it by now.



"But it's going to be so different without you here." She stood there, with the same miserable expression.

"I'll still be around. I can stop by, to hang out if you want. Besides, it's not like I'm planning on spending THAT much time at home."

That seemed to cheer her up, just a little bit, not that I even understand why it would make a difference either way.

We finished up, and Dave dropped me off at my house. No one was expecting me to be there, so I unpacked everything by myself. Considering how the past few months had been, I should've been ecstatic to have some time to myself, but not tonight. Sure enough, at the first opportunity, I wasn't actually in the mood to just sit around by myself. I knew that whatever I did tonight, I'd end up being depressed. That's just how I'd been lately, and I wasn't expecting it to change overnight. The idea was that if I was going to be depressed, I'd at least be depressed somewhere pleasant.

I went for a walk and headed over to Maxwell's, which was one of my favorite places in the world. Maxwell's is a small bar and restaurant that's really nice, but not in a snooty kind of way. They've got great food, and the staff is comprised entirely of various punks and indie rock people, so I could go there and not feel really uncomfortable. The best part was the back room, where they had a small stage and PA, and had live music there nearly every other night. I used to go there all the time, to see all sorts of different bands play over the years. It was right as I got there that I realized how long it had been since the last time I'd actually hung out there. Since I'd started school, I was usually busy, and stayed there over the weekends. For the most part, I never made a big attempt to bring to many of my friends there, since most of them weren't into stuff like that. However, coming back at least reminded me that despite everything else, there were still things in the world I loved.



Usually I already knew what was going on whenever I went to Maxwell's, but with the way things had been going, I figured that tonight I'd just take my chances. No matter what, it was still nice hanging out there again. The walls of the back room were still decorated with a mix of old jazz posters and vintage framed ads, as well as flyers for every band that was coming through town over the next few months. It seemed as if somehow the entire room was lit by nothing more than the stage lights, as well as some strands of Christmas lights, mostly strung up around the bar.

Since I wasn't there specifically for any of the bands, I just went to the back, and watched while leaning against the wall. The band on the stage was a country band, but played fairly slow and were very mellow, almost like if The Replacements were more sober (this would be one of those moments where it all makes sense in my head, just not to anyone else). All that really mattered was that it was nice, and very relaxing. They didn't sound like any of the country that got played on the radio, so that was good enough for me. It was just nice to be back.

I was standing there, finally enjoying myself when I realized that someone had found me and been trying to get my attention: my girlfriend.

(Well, you know the story behind that by now.)

She had been hanging out with Kathleen, who'd mentioned my moving out. She said she wanted to make sure that everything was ok with me, and that she'd figured that I'd be here. It felt nice to hear someone say that they were thinking of me, and how I was doing. It also made me feel really cool that someone would expect to find me in a place like this. She asked if it was alright for her to be here, or if I wanted to be by myself. I told her I'd love for her to stay.

She was actually the one person I'd brought with me here once, shortly after we started spending a lot of time together. I wanted to show her something that was a really big deal to me, so she came along, and she actually seemed to like it. She may have been lying, but she at least pretended to enjoy it, which I suppose was worth something, but she seemed pretty happy to be there at the time.



I hadn't seen her in a while, so we hung out and watched the rest of the show together. Once everything finished up, we walked around town for a while, stopping to get drinks at a convenience store, and sat and talked in the parking lot. We talked about things, and I explained to her about how everything had been going, and what had led to me moving out. She looked at me and apologized, even though none of it was her fault. I turned to face her, and she looked sad, even though she the most understanding, and had already done more to make me feel better than anyone else.

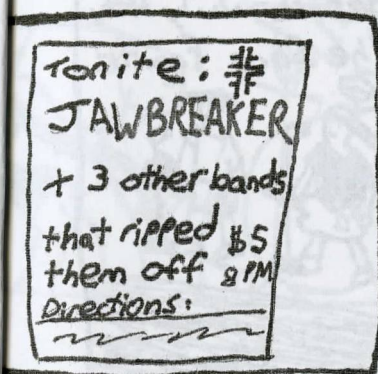
I just sat there for a moment, staring into my oversized soda cup. After thinking about it for a second, I looked back up at her, and smiled. I started to retell every funny story from the past few years that I could think of from while we'd been friends. It worked, as she began to smile, and after a minute, the two of us were sitting there laughing together. The both of us just sat there, enjoying each others company.

And that was it, really. All we were doing was sitting there and talking, but with how the past few months had been, this was the most fun I'd had in a long time.

What IF:

Jawbreaker ever DID  
actually reunite???

(I can't draw crowds yet,  
so I figured Zoloft™ mascots  
would work for now ↴)

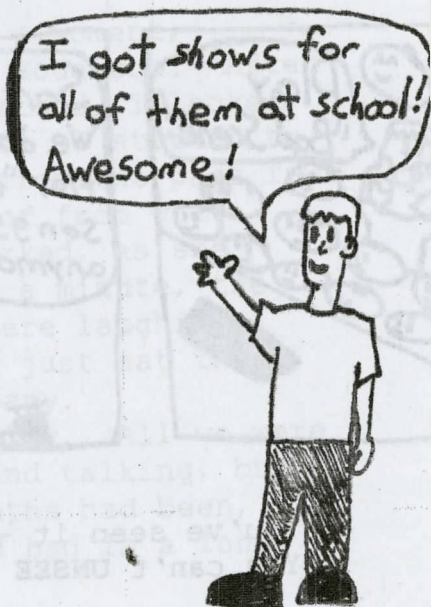
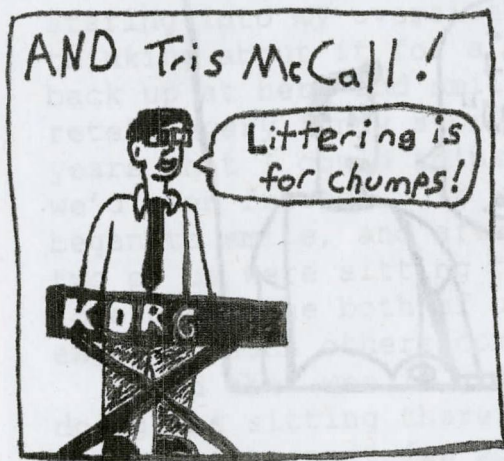
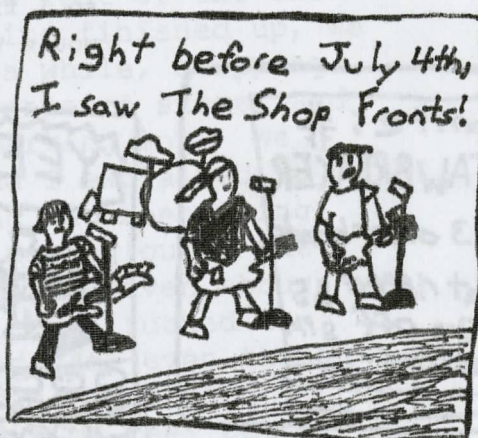
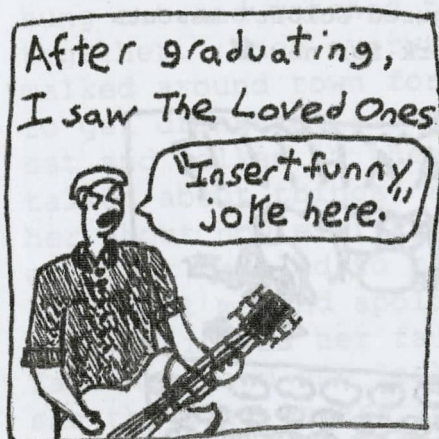


You've seen it -  
You can't UNSEE it.



## Reevaluation Summer

This year has easily been the weirdest year of my life, especially since I finished school:



got to see  
the Evens play  
in a park!



I saw a bunch of  
great bands, some for  
the first time:

The Ergs!

The Unlovables!

Parts And Labor!

The World/Inferno  
Friendship Society!

Plus there was the  
eengenerate reunion



And Kid Dynamite!

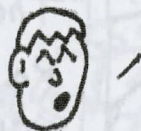




I wrote a letter  
to Razorcake —  
they said I could  
write for their  
website!



This summer I've  
seen great bands,  
made new friends,  
and met some of  
my heros!



The world may suck,  
but life can still be  
really cool sometimes.

