

the POST-IT DIARIES

memos from the unreal world
by Amy Adoyzie

I'm a sucker.

A neurotic, sentimental fool whose guiltiest of pleasures are televised human interest stories, journalistic filler about the strength of the human spirit, the virtues of hard work and inspirational shit that makes you weepy. They are tales made up with enough clichés to fill a hundred Bah-bah-wah Walters specials of "overcoming adversity," "beating the odds," and/or "making dreams come true."

I've always been fascinated by the magic turning a dream into reality, and the folks who have the power to do so like Mickey Mouse, Oprah Winfrey, Santa and me.

Yup, everyone's favorite rittle chinky is a dream-come-true-maker, if only on a slightly pedestrian scale. Perhaps it wasn't a full-fledged fly-to-space or win-a-date-with-heartthrob-Zack-Morris dream come true, but it was something solid, tangible and gave me health benefits after three months.

I got a job.

Cliché but true: My folks are refugee immigrants who came to this country without a dollar between them. Somewhere in between sweatshop labor, a job at a box factory and trying to forget a war while starting a new life in a foreign place- they squeezed out three babies. I was the first one.

Dad named me after the president's daughter, Amy Carter, a symbol and gesture that is layered in so much depth and solidified my destiny of mediocre success.

As very pragmatic people and reasonable dreamers, my parents are aware of what's possible and don't ask too much. They wanted us to become doctors and lawyers, and when we didn't share the same aspirations—they hoped that we would find careers where we could sit in front of a computer and enjoy air conditioning for 40 hours a week. No manual labor or standing all day like dad who is a machine operator or mom who serves Chinese fast food. Just a/c and our asses firmly planted in cushy office chairs, maybe even the kind with wheels.

I emerged from the womb of my public university like a super-fetus clutching a piece of paper that cost me a many-many thousands of dollars in student loans that I had to find a way to repay. Wide-eyed and optimistic, I was born-again with a naïve sense of possibilities. Six months and a part-time-personal-assistant-job later I BS-ed my way into an authentically adult job as the New Media Associate at the local public television station—the same one I watched as an ESL child in Chinatown.

It was a job that didn't even exist when my folks first came to this country- web maintenance and production for the TV station that aired *Sesame Street*- and now it was my post-collegiate trophy of mainstream success and entry into the real world. Old-school Chinese parents seldom boast about their children, as a life-long exercise in humility. Imagine my surprise when I overheard mom and dad bragging about my new job at the TV station (ooohhh) working with the interweb (aaahhh), to friends and strangers alike.

Just like that, a dream was fulfilled. Just like that and I had my own desk, with not one-but two monitors and a padded chair- with wheels.

But it wasn't my dream, it was something my parents wanted for their children so that we would have the luxury of sitting on our asses for the rest of our lives rather than toil through physical labor. It's a dream perpetuated by our consumerist culture and working-for-the-weekend attitude, where everyone has to put in their time amidst cubicles and greyness in order to be productive citizens who buys lots of things.

I might be a sucker, but I'm not willing to suspend my disbelief for another 45 years while living in a daze illuminated by fluorescent lights.

Even under the most ideal circumstances, working for Big Bird at a non-profit organization, it was still a job mired in office bureaucracy and the politics of any other corporate workplace. Our New Media department was especially immersed in a perverse (over)work(ed) culture of unhealthy proportions.

The resulting pages are a record of my brief time in that chair with wheels. It begins with a few entries about the personal-assistant position, followed by the story of my foray into a career. All names have been changed and the TV station will be referred to as KJOB. The diary was originally published online at livejournal.com (LJ), so when I refer to LJ - I'm writing about the blog itself. There are typos and misspellings that have not been altered from the way they were when the entries first appeared. As is the nature of journaling, there are gaps in time where I didn't write and I will fill in those holes with some *hindsightful* commentary in this typeface in between entries. This is by no means a complete record of my time there, but it represents my experience fully with its moments of utter defeat, kooky silliness and air of indignation.

The journal was a cathartic release, especially after my idea of placing a punching bag in our office was turned down. I made it a rule that I would only write about work while at work, stealing minutes during each entry. We were working on an economy of time, pay-per-hour, unfortunately I put in a lot of uncompensated overtime and to make up for it I nicked and dined them by daydreaming, reading celebrity gossip websites and robbing them of the precious time it took for me to write.

While I may have cursed much of my time at KJOB, I am still thankful for the experience because I learned a lot about the balance of work and life and myself. I don't ever regret having worked there because the experience was invaluable and I scored some free office supplies.

It is a clichéd saga: a cautionary tale of being careful of what you wish for, a coming of age story of entry-level adulthood, and ultimately ending in a plan for escape.

I hope you'll enjoy these memos from an unreal world.

May 2006

Friday, December 20, 2002 – 2:23 am

"Well, what do you want to be when you grow up?"

I just don't want to wake up every morning hating my life.

That's the scariest fucking thing.

I used to be scared of mediocrity. And now, I wish I wasn't so fucking idealistic, naive and sober.

In December 2002, I graduated with a Bachelor's of Arts degree in Journalism, with an emphasis on Photojournalism and a minor in Women's Studies. As a walking liberal arts clusterfuck, I was the first to earn a college degree on my Mom's side of the family and the second on my Dad's side. I stuck my diploma in a \$15 frame and presented it to my folks—I figured that they earned it just as much as I did.

Thursday, January 9, 2003 – 3:04 am

Writing your resume is like a depressing episode of "This is Your Life."

Scanning the list of almost-minimum-wage jobs, you can't help but become a bit teary-eyed at all the hours you spent assisting people in overconsuming as a cash register jockey or when you used to just stare at your cubicle wall as a typist/transcriber while inflicting so much stress on your hands that you couldn't grip a pen without extreme pain.

I am so tempted to have a "Why I Kick Ass" subheading in which I list the bands I have been in, the zines I have made and other pertinent information about the person I am, rather than the paystubs I have accumulated.

Thursday, February 6, 2003 – 12:53 am

Before getting into bed last night at 5am, my armpits were sore. My little lymph nodes under there were telling me, "Hey Amy, you're getting sickies!" It wasn't much of a surprise to me because I've been blowing shit out of my nose for the past few days anyway.

This morning/afternoon I decided to sleep in, rather than waking up at a reasonable hour (1 or 2 in the afternoon... haha) to do stuff while daylight was still out. At approximately 10:50 am my phone rang. It was the woman who I had an interview with last Friday. I am totally groggy and unpresentable.

"So, you wanna come in and try this typing thing?" she asked.

I can't even remember how I responded, but I believe it was something to the effect of, "Yeah, sure!"

"Can you come in tomorrow?"

"What is tomorrow?" I asked more asleep than I am awake. I imagine that in the world of things to say to your new boss that would rank pretty low. "Is tomorrow Thursday?"

"Yeah."

"I can't tomorrow then...I've got..." Then my speech becomes unintelligible. Even I can't recall what I said. I was much too tired and sick to be embarrassed.

"Did I wake you?" she asked.

"Yeah, I think I'm coming down with something so I decided to sleep in." Woah, quick thinking Amy, yeah, tell her you only slept in today because you're sick. But don't tell her about all the other days that you slept in just because you were lazy and enjoyed atrophying to death.

"Oh, you better keep your germs to yourself then! I'll give you a call on Monday morning."

After I hung up, I fell back onto my pillow. Instead of worrying about my half-assed performance and induction into my new position as a writer's assistant, all I could think of is that she's going to call me on Monday morning.

You realize that's, like, in the A.M., right? So, now I have to actually prepare and wake up (very) early and dote around my apartment to wait for her call for my first day of my post-undergraduate career.

The sickest part of this whole ordeal? Nah, it isn't that I'm actually ill, or even a bit ill-prepared. It's that I actually want to be someone's glorified personal assistant. I like the idea of getting paid pretty well to go grocery shopping (an activity that I thoroughly enjoy), to make appointments, to be immersed in my boss's work drama (I'll have to sign a confidentiality agreement, because I can't leak all the shit she says about Industry folk), to basically keep tabs on someone else's life while I quietly live mine.

It's part-time and flexible, and best of all there isn't an office full of people I have to see every Monday morning with a pasted-on smile faking like I'm glad I'm there. I've only got to fake it with one woman, and she seems pretty cool. I mean, she cussed a few times during my interview, so it can't be that bad.

I had an uncanny ability in foreshadowing.

I continued to search for full-time employment while I worked for the screenwriter and stumbled upon a position that seemed perfect. The local PBS affiliate was hiring. I had the opportunity to work for an organization I believed in with work that wouldn't leave me feeling guilty at the end of the day. I submitted my resume and crossed my fingers.

Friday, May 16, 2003 – 3:14 pm

Isn't it disturbing? HUMAN resources? Like natural resources? We're a renewable/disposable resource!

On Thursday night, exactly one week from when the interview took place, I received a call. It was the head of HR at KJOB.

"Hi," she's much too cheerful for her own good. "I just called to let you know that you're a finalist and Boss Lady wants to interview everyone one more time before they make the decision."

"Wow!" I thought. My heart fluttered. I was a FINALIST!

Now it's become a contest! And if I were to win, my grand prize is 40+ hours of drudgery! Yeah! Fuck watching the Price is Right every morning in my jammies! All Bob Barker could ever offer me is a Sea-do.

Monday, June 2, 2003 – 2:17 am

I called head of HR back at about 5:30 pm after I had gotten home from the screenwriter's house. She said she had good news. I gave Corey the thumbs up. She said, "We'd like to offer you the position."

My mouth fell open. My hand went up to cover it.

"Are you excited?" she asked.

"Yes! I'm excited." I just didn't think it would be appropriate for me to whoop and holler like I had just won tickets to see W get socked in the face or something.

Then I called everyone. I finally got a hold of mom. All she cares about is me buying a car.

I asked if she's proud of me, she said she is.

I asked if dad was proud of me, he said, "Okay."

Infected with a cold and a case of nerves, I couldn't sleep the night before my first day at work on July 14, 2003. I arrived at KJOB, still tired and groggy and endured the always-awkward company tour from Boss Lady, our departmental Vice President, where I was introduced to everyone and promptly forgot their names and titles. While the manager was training me, I fought back yawns and could hardly concentrate. Perhaps it was an omen, or I just needed to go home and nap.

During my first couple of months at KJOB, I didn't write about work at all. I was too busy trying to keep my shit together, working late into the night to make sure that everything was perfectly updated on the station website while grappling with my responsibilities as Boss Lady's assistant. I was hired as a New Media Associate, which meant that I was a jill-of-all-trades in charge of web maintenance and production, assistant office manager responsibilities, etc and 20% of my duties were allocated to serving Boss Lady. It wasn't until a year later when I learned that the time I started working there was the one-year anniversary of Boss Lady's father's death—something still fresh and raw to her. It made her moody and difficult to work with, nothing like the pleasantly quirky woman who interviewed me. She had me come in a half-hour before everyone else showed up. One of my morning duties was to turn on her computer—as to save her those precious 20 seconds that it took for her machine to boot. When I forgot to push that power button, she'd holler from her office to let me know.

Unable to cope and not knowing how else to deal with Boss Lady's harsh and sometimes irrational behavior sent me into crying jags several times during my first months there.

It was an especially lonely experience because neither the Producer nor Manager, the only other two people in our department, ever consoled or commiserated with me. It was as if her behavior was par for the course, and I was the one who needed to shape up.

Thursday, September 25, 2003 – 2:07 pm

I am so young and naive and I don't give a shit.

When someone asks me, "How are you?" I actually tell them how I'm feeling instead of the empty, "Good, how're you?" Some people are put off by it, namely my manager. I think he thinks I'm being whiny when I say, "I'm tired."

"Tired of looking at the computer monitor all day. Going blind. Sensory deprivation."

Yeah, who am I to verbalize how I am really feeling?

Thursday, October 2, 2003 – 1:33 pm

"Amy..."

My manager shakes his head slowly in disbelief at the words that have just left my mouth. He tends to do that quite often. He sighs a bit.

"Yeah, I'd hang out with him. Politics aside, he seems like a cool kick-back guy to hang out with."

Producer and manager shift their gaze back at the man I am talking about. The computer screen features a New York Times photograph of Walker Bush Junior hanging out with Vincente Fox. Walker looks particularly smarmy in this photo.

"Look what power and money will get you," manager says.

As if I'm sincerely looking to hang out with Walker so that he'd buy me nice things.

"What? If he weren't doing what he does, I'd bet he's fun to just have some beers with. Shoot the shit." I mean, I bet he'd have some crazy stories from the days when he was a mad coke-head.

Nope, it's not working. Try imagining that humans are not binary beings. Manager has no sense of humor about this guy. Am I particularly retarded to think that I may want to share a pitcher with him? No, really?

Monday, October 6, 2003 - 10:46 am

Mommies say the darndest things...

My mom's always asking about my job. She's so curious about the inner-workings of office bureaucracies. She also enjoys listening to me bitching about my boss.

Last night, during one of these conversations, she ponders as to why my boss may be so bipolar in behavior. I told my mom that she's just a cranky old lady.

"Maybe it's menopause," my Mom says in English.

!!!!!!HAhahHhAHAhahahHA!!!!!!HAHAHAHhahahahahha!!!!!!

Whew... Best mommy ever, EVER.

3:41 pm

According to this little doohickey, for every ONE Big Mac I can afford based on my salary, Rushy Limbaugh can easily cart away a whopping ONE THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED FIFTY TWO (1,152) Big Macs based on his bloated salary. Woah. He's gonna need em to chase down all those pain killers he's been downing.

And the time it took for me to write up this entry, I was paid \$3.55, before taxes of course.

Tuesday, October 14, 2003 - 3:27 pm

Just minutes ago I told my manager that Ken Burns is completely overrated. He gave me a look.

I asked, "Am I gonna get fired now?"

He nodded.

Friday, October 17, 2003 - 4:46 pm

The worst part of my job.

It has afforded me the luxury of getting shitfaced like a little shitfaced fucker who really shouldn't be getting so shitfaced at bars by her lonesome, but can't seem to find any other way around it.

She ends up getting so shitfaced that she passes out in her own fucking car in a parking lot a couple of blocks from the bar. She passes out wishing she had a

blanket and then waking up an hour and a half later, head still numbed in the back and bleary-eyed as ever, starts her fucking car that she bought with the money from her high-fallutin' job, and wonders around for a gas station because she has to pee all that shitface juice out of her.

After sitting on the gas station toilet for about 15-minutes she emerges to return the key to the distraught gas station employee. She thinks he knows she's shitfaced and should not be operating heavy machinery. She doesn't care because she's shitfaced because she can afford to be. She starts her car and drives down the block and parks her car behind another one and climbs to the backseat to sleep some more before some heavy heavy-machinery operating all the way back to her dinky apartment.

But she can't sleep because she's at that point of her shitfacedness where she just wants the comfort of her own bed. She drives down the block to a friend who lives nearby. But they're only shitface friends so she's not sure if it's cool if she comes by shitfaced and looking for a couch to crash on. So she knocks on windows and doors but everyone is already passed out from their shitfaced nights and she doesn't want to intrude even though she is about 89% sure that their front door is unlocked and that she could let herself in. But there are other shitfaced circumstances that interfere with her reasoning to not go into the house. Reasons that shall go unspecified at this time.

At this point, it is about 4:30esque A.M.

She ends up getting her shitfaced ass home without maiming anyone, namely herself, and without getting pulled over and getting her license suspended for which she would forever feel like shit for. She wakes up mid-day to leave a message on a friend's answering machine to tell him that she's no longer shitfaced and that she has slept it off with no hangover residue. And that ultimately, she blames her job for affording such luxuries as the exercise in shitfacedness.

I had been equipped with a terribly anti-ergonomical workstation. My cushy office chair, that I swiped from an adjoining department because we're low-budget like that, was broken and offered no back support. My desk was too high and it forced me to strain every time I typed or used the mouse, which was all the time. Eventually, I developed a tingly and piercing pain in my right hand, a shooting sensation up my right arm, and then the same occurred in my left hand and arm. It got to the point where I couldn't even drive anymore because holding my arms up for minutes at a time was unbearable and every night I went home and iced my wrist and slathered them in Bengay.

I was scared. I thought it was carpal tunnel syndrome and I thought I might lose the very job that injured me. I was reluctantly sent to HR, where they sent me to a nearby hospital and I was diagnosed with repetitive stress syndrome and put on Worker's Comp. The news devastated me because I was still on probation, with a Temporary Personnel tag and everything, and I feared that I wouldn't be hired on permanently.

Monday, October 20, 2003 - 10:55 pm

holy hell i suck

typing with one hand is hard.

other hand is now under worker's comp.

it has been rendered immobile by medical professionals. med prof said to not go to work for rest of week.

told office of this news. i felt like such an asshole dickface.

i cried.

in front of my fucking boss. because i felt so bad.

conclusion: amy needs to not be so f'in emo.

Tuesday, October 21, 2003 - 10:15 pm

holy hell THEY suck

i courageously went to work today. (still typing with left hand only)

and they fucking booted my ass.

my boss straight up yelled at me. saying that i didn't tell her that it was doctors orders that i was to be off work. which is ass bullshit, cause i mustve told her at least three times and her, in old age, couldn't listen and comprehend my quickie-talk.

she said, "this isn't cute."

as if i thought it would be cute to LIE to her and come into work, because working is so fucking CUTE. (and it just bugs me that she would use such a femininey adjective to describe my behavior. i've never heard her yell at my male co-workers and accusing them in trying to be cute.)

bitchface fatherfucker.

so... i ended up balling my eyeballs out going north on the 101. and i'm off work the rest of the week and am covered by workers comp. sadly, part of me is actually paranoid about losing my gainful employment.



I was put on anti-inflammatory meds to keep my hands and arms agile and I had electroshock therapy on my wrists twice a week. I scheduled my appointments so that they wouldn't interfere with my work hours. But that didn't keep my fellow co-workers from guiltting me at times when I didn't show up a half-hour before them like I usually did. I almost felt like a wuss because I got hurt. It was all part of our departmental work culture, where there was no time for sympathy if there was work to be done and there was always work to be done.

An ergonomics specialist was sent in to inspect our department and my desk was rearranged and the nice dudes in the company's maintenance department built me a foot rest for my shorty legs. We also got the go-ahead

to purchase new chairs, with high-backs and all of the adjustable knobs actually adjusted. I felt like I did the department a favor, but the Producer felt like it was an extravagance we couldn't afford, that was until he got his chair too.

Friday, November 7, 2003 – 12:08 pm

Every so often, if you peek into our department, you will see me feeling myself up. Do not be alarmed.

You can relax. It's no big deal. I'm just checking on the status of my ever-shrinking boobers.

Monday, November 10, 2003 – 2:26 pm

"Stop the whining. Act your age."

She said that to me. My "See-You-Next-Tuesday" boss lady said that to me. She meant it. It wasn't one of those razzing comments that higher-ups say to their subordinates. She fucking meant it.

C-U-N-T.

The context in which these comment arose aren't as important as the fact that she even uttered them. And they were completely unwarranted.

Context: There's a semi-important "Behind the Scenes" photo assignment I'm supposed to do. I was about 15 minutes late because whenever I am away from my computer for an extended period of time, and it "sleeps," the clock seems to sleep with it. Thus setting it back however long it was asleep. This time, about 15 minutes.

Misunderstanding: I thought my manager was going to go with me. Actually, I'm pretty sure he was. But he forgot too. So, when I walked into his office, while he was talking to boss lady, and said, "Uh, are we going yet?" He said, with a bit of panic in his eyes, "I thought you were going alone."

No dice, dude. Fucking trying to save face so I look like a douchebag.

Then I explained that #1) I thought he was coming with me, because he had gone with me before. #2) My clock is messed up.

That's when boss lady hulked out. "Stop the whining. Act your age."

I wasn't whining. But she doesn't take kindly to people slipping up, especially herself, that's why she never messes up. She's perfect. Don't ever contradict her, because there's never a case to be made against her.

She wants me to act my age? Holy fuck. I can come into work unsobber. I can spit up on her. I can blast Against Me! really loud. I can fling shit at her.

Best part: I rush downstairs to super-pseudo-important shoot, and guess what? It's running late. About a half-hour late. Manager and I come back upstairs and she asks him, "Is it running late or is it over?" I bet she secretly wishes it were over, so she could give me more shit.

"It's running late."

So, I wasn't late after all. I was, in fact, early. So, now I'm killing time with the LJ. And she has yet to apologize for being an old, catty puta.

Thursday, November 14, 2003 – 12:53 pm

Seriously, I have acknowledged my mental illness for some time now. I have actually never been diagnosed by a professional quack, but it's just one of those things that one knows about oneself. Like, you know you're hungry when you're

stomach growls. You know you're sleepy when you yawn a bunch. You know you're drunk when you're making out with strange people (plural). Just like I know I'm mentally ill because I am pissed at my interns because they are fat, lazy, careless piggies.

They make me wanna rule with an iron fist because I have been much too sympathetic. Sure, they come in on their own free will and volition and don't get paid a dime. But I'd rather they not come in if they're just going to eat our snacks and do a sloppy job.

Intern Old-Lady-Walk. OLK is constantly annoying me with her apparent physical frailty. She must be, oh, like 22-23 years old, but she walks like C. Montgomery Burns on a bad day. I wouldn't even call it walking, it's more like limping towards another day of being a miserly 22-year-old. She always looks at me like I'm speaking Creole, and she speaks with hushed tones. Sometimes I actually want to sock her in the back of the neck and yell, "SPEAK THE FUCK UP!" She told me that her sister called her a sloth. I FUCKING BELIEVE IT.

Intern Midwestern-Bad-Writer MBW is constantly fucking around on the net. (Unlike myself...) But it is obviously hindering her work, which isn't that great to begin with. She said that when she took the GREs which indicated she couldn't write or add at a basic Cromag level. We both shared a hearty laugh about that one, because how could someone who did so poorly be in Grad school (She's studying History... [I don't even want to get into that the psyche of people who "study" History])? And I don't have much faith in those tests anyway. But after dealing with her, I must say that they do bear some merit because she CAN'T write and has no real "eye" for photography (the reason we thought she'd be an asset). And she never shares her snacks... Which brings me to what sparked this rant:

THEY ARE ALWAYS EATING OUR SNACKS

Listen, I was raised with the manners of a civilized monkey but have still managed to keep from being beaten for lack of etiquette. There is always one moment during their shift that I want to pinch them really hard. They have no restraint. Anytime someone brings in anything remotely communal, no matter what/who/shit it is, they jump out of their seats and scuttle towards it. I know, you're thinking, "Fuck, Amy, get the fuck over it. Give the poor dumb piggies some snacks... Shit. You need to just chill. Or some Paxil."

LETS GET TO THE HEART OF THE MATTER

It's about entitlement. I have to be here 40+ hours a week and put up with my moody boss, obtaining repetitive stress injuries, deal with their piggy asses and all the peripheral bureaucracy that comes with non-profit office politics. It is rare that I feel entitled to anything. But I sure as hell feel entitled to yummy baked Armenian goods.

I feel entitled to indulge in a few pieces of pastry without one of them mouth-breathing over my shoulder. So what I'm trying to say is that, I'm really no better than them because I just spent all this time writing this entry that has "MAN, AMY IS RETARDED" written all over it. (And now, written literally within it.)

3:04 pm

Okay... All better now.

In addition to being mentally ill, I also have a problem with rage.

Stands up amid a small group

"Hi everyone. I'm Amy, the girl who doesn't actually work at work, but writes incessant crap in her LJ instead, and I'm a rageaholic."

What can I say? Rageaholics need the rage-a-hol.

I'm not mad at the interns anymore because I ate some pastry and I'm all calm-ded down-deds.

Monday, November 17, 2003 - 6:00 pm

While on a B-room break...

... three questions came to mind:

1. Why is pee yellow?
2. Why is poo brown?
3. Why are mocos sometimes white, clear, to green and yellow?

Monday, December 1, 2003 - 10:15 am

Tired is an understatement. I wished I was tired. Tired would be a godsend right about now.

It feels like a hangover, minus the raucous night out and alcohol. It feels like a frontal lobotomy with a rusty screwdriver. It feels like a rubbery Barbie head that's being run over again and again by a Tonka Truck.

I spent Thanksgiving in Portland by way of craigslist e-hitchhiking. On my ride up, I was with this uptight semi-yuppie returning to Portland. Car had no heat and was a stick. I can't drive stick. One AM stick driving lessons in the middle of Northern California = Bad idea. Came back back to Cali Cali with a Marine Corps. Special Ops dude in a U-Haul. Like woah. I soooo thought I was in for some butt rape-age. But it turns out he's pretty awesome. A libertarian who only eats organic foods. Sheds a tear during all dog movies. We conclude that it is rooted in having seen "Where the Red Fern Grows" when he was younger and crying during the cliché ending. He remembers "The Peanut Butter Solution." I confess to him that it scared the Jesus out of me when I was in third grade. He understands. We even pick up a hippie on her way to the Rainbow Gathering and my eyes nearly fall out of my face from rolling backwards so much while I listen to her talk about how the government owns everything and then she proceeds to call everyone from her phone book on her cell phone and ends her calls by saying, "Ciao."

Got home yesterday at about noon and I'm still recuperating from two marathon 15-hour car rides within days of each other and I'm volunteering at a pledge drive tonight too.

11:22 am

I wish that life weren't so predictably cyclical. Every month or two I want to kill everyone. With my bare hands.

I don't want to wake up and go to work. I detest my job with a tinge of apathy, like only kids my age can do. But I made a commitment and I won't quit. Because #1) Amy Adoyzie ain't no quitter. (I know, its double negative, but I still ain't no quitter). #2) I'm raking it in!!! Woopy. (Actually, "raking it in" is subjective, which means that for the most part I am not raking much of anything in. As the name implies, non-profits don't make much money, which means that their employees don't make much money either. Funny how things work, huh?)

#3) As everything tends to be cyclical, I tend to fall madly in love with my job just as much as I want to lop its balls off. #4) When I am in a ball-lopping-off mood, I am easily assuaged and subside my blinding rage-aholic behavior by merely posting entries on my LJ. Ahhh, how soothing.

Tuesday, December 2, 2003 – 12:13 pm

After a free dinner of greasy food, we were led into one of our main studios on the lot and given a brief briefing about how to be pleasant when taking money from people who are paying for their share of Mister Roger and Bill Moyer. We are given sanitizing wipes to clean our beige phone of cooties and set to work.

Highlights include me convincing a dude to pledge \$500 for concert tickets to see Sarah Brightman after I helped him find his wallet, which was by the door on a corner table.

I wasn't aware that there was a population who called pledge drives with no intention to donate whatsoever:

"Hi, it's my birthday. Can I have the DVD and CD set for free?" the caller asked.

"Well, you can have the DVD and 5-CD set for a \$145 pledge."

"But it's my birthday."

"I know, but I can't give things away," I sound much too understanding.

"I can't even get the CD? It's my birthday, it only happens one day a year!" He pleaded.

"I know. But we need your donation so that we can put on quality programming everyday of the year."

"I can't even get the CD?"

"No, I'm sorry."

Click.

I'd rather you call with a question like this lady who phoned in during a concert show featuring Neil Diamond and a shiny shirt and said, "Hi, I don't wanna donate any money, but I have a question." That's always a good start.

"Yeah?" I replied.

"Me and my husband are arguing about Neil Diamond's hair," I looked to a monitor at the side of the soundstage. "Was it always that light brown-blond color?" She asked.

"Uh, no. It used to be darker," I said with as much authority as someone can say about Mr. Diamond's hair history.

"It used to be black, right?"

"Uh, yes?"

"She says it was black before," she hollered at her husband. "See?! I done told you!" Her jubilation is apparent when she chuckles, "You helped me win an argument! I've never won anything!"

Monday, December 8, 2003 – 2:56 pm

I don't think I have ever mentioned that someone I went to school with works here as well. We share the same major, but her emphasis is slightly more evil than mine (Public relations). Anyway, we have insta-bond because we attended the same mediocre state college. We have this standing dinner date once a month (after pay-day) where we go out to eat after work and just STRAIGHT UP TALK SMACK FOR TWO HOURS about our jobs. Holy lord, it's

so relaxing. [Ed. note: initially, I actually thought that she asked me out! God, I'm so conceited! But it turns out that she's just a chubby girl who likes to gossip and drink after work.]

One of her most vivid memories about me at school was that I used to (still do) wear a New Kids on the Block shirt to class. [Ed. note II: You'd be surprised at how many grown-ass women will get super giddy upon seeing my child's large t-shirt emblazoned with our boys dressed up in tuxedos.]

Just a minute ago, my producer returns from a trip to her department bearing a gift from her. It's a piece of fruitcake with a Post-It (R) note stuck to it which reads,

"To: Amy

From: Jordan Knight."

Haha, good one! So I e-mail her:

Dear Jordan Knight,

Thanks for the fruitcake, fruitcake.

Love,

Amy

Moral of the story: FRUIT CAKE SUCKS! In all my years as an American citizen, I have been able to avoid the much maligned FRUIT CAKE. I know well enough to trust sitcoms when they say that fruit cakes are only good as paper weight and to re-gift to your arch-nemesis (yes, plural, I'm always hard at work).

But in my native office environment, anything that is half-way edible is fair game. It's something about the fluorescent lighting and the omni-hum of radiation boxes that make you hungry. Hungry for anything. So I foolishly unwrapped the cellophane from the small brown slice. At first, to my untrained eye, it looked like a nutty brownie. "How utterly fantastic," I thought in a faux-English accent.

I bite heartily into its softness only to experience what I imagine plastic dog toys would taste like. I am not pleased. This is not an utterly fantastic brownie. There are pieces of translucent red and yellow fake fruit chunk thingies wobbling throughout. Oh my god, my taste buds are considering suicide because they don't know how to recover from such an atrocity.

This is the moment where I realize that this is just part of a lifelong self-inflicted hazing process into becoming a real American. There are so many things that young Amy has yet to experience. *Sigh* There is a whole world of Americana out there that I have yet to stick in my mouth.

But all in all, FRUIT CAKE SUCKS.

Tuesday, December 9, 2003 pm - 5:48 pm

All them cutey boys who work on our lot are either employed by the production companies that are in the haunted section of this property or they're right next door, in the offices of a local news magazine program.

There are too many to count. With shaggy and/or disheveled mops. Tall, skinny ones. Facial hair. In vintage t-shirts. Awesome shoes. So cutey I don't think he'd ever go out with me. Today, one of them, the tall one with brown hair, he looked through the foot-wide glass panel between my desk and the outside hall while I was mid-bite with a breakfast bar. I looked up just as I had half an

organic "Strawberry Walks Into a Bar" bar sticking out of my fat face, and we just stared at each other for a few seconds.

Then, just now, he's in the hall again. My producer just walked away from my desk after a conversation about our Holidays off (we talk a lot about days off around here...), so I was in a smiley face. I turn, and there he is, pausing to open a door next to the hall, peering in at me. We just looked at each other for a few more seconds. Then he's gone.

All them cutey boys. I have a crush on every one of them and don't know any of their names. I think I'll name this one Creepy Look-Look boy. Rolls right off your tongue, doesn't it?

I'm hoping he rolls right off my tongue, alright...

EWWWWW, I'M SO LAME! HAHAAHAHAHAHAHAHAH

P.S. When do you think time theft will become unlawful? Hopefully, not within my lifetime.

Thursday, December 11, 2003 - 10:53 am

Last Friday night, before all of us escaped for our short weekend reprieve, I wondered into my producer's office to naively ask, "Uh... Did you get a Christmas bonus last year?"

The face that he made said more than words ever could. It was a big fat resounding NO. I was such a dork to think otherwise. HELLO! WE HAVE TO PAY FOR PARKING HERE!!! How in hell can they afford to hand out bonuses for their public service minions if they can't afford to keep the parking structure intact? We figured that it would be nice if they refunded our parking fee for X-mas. That would be hella bonus.

As it turns out, the company's holiday gift to us is an "Employee Holiday Breakfast," which took place this morning. WOOHOO! SCRAMBLED EGGS!

But that's not the best part, I haven't even mentioned the goody bags that were handed out. Here are some of the few items that were thrown in:

Do not adjust your sets, yes, it is a CASSETTE TAPE entitled, "Vikki Carr: Memories, Memorias." I think all of the songs are in Spanish.



My peeps who have lived in SoCal will appreciate this one. It's a VHS featuring Fritz Coleman, unfunny stand-up comedian turned weatherman for the LA NBC affiliate. "It's Me! Dad!" is a "funny and poignant one-man show about life, love, parenting, mid-life crises, and, yes, even weather." Personally, I'm waiting for the DVD version with the director's commentary on how he has achieved nothing in his life.

With the other junk they decided to toss at us, at least I know that it's surplus junk that they couldn't give away (well, apparently, they did), but I cannot even begin to explain this.

"LAWRY'S 30 MINUTE MARINADE FOR CHICKEN, MEAT & FISH" It's "SESAME GINGER WITH MANDARIN ORANGE JUICE" (!!!!!!!!!)

Nothing says, "Hey, just be happy you get a paycheck every now and then" more than a bottle of marinade for Christmas.

These gifts were made possible by viewers like you.

Thanks, assholes!

Tuesday, December 16, 2003 – 9:44 am

I can rob time from right in front of you and you'd have thunk I'd just given you head. That's how good I am at disguising my inactivity. But stealing copies, woah, that's something else altogether.

It doesn't help that the only copy machine in our building (that I am aware of) is in the department adjacent to ours. The department with all them cutey boys that seem to always be hovering over that duplicator doing *real* work, whereas I just want to make photocopies of graphics I had designed for my silly zine. I've resigned from further xerox theft, I'll slump towards the 24-hour Kinkos tonight instead. (Anyone know good thieving tips for the Kinks?)

5:42 pm

Lately my life has been this: Sleep. Drive. Work. Drive. Home. Write. Rinse. Repeat.

This morning, when I awoke to my clock radio blaring classical music, I actually vocalized, "Did I even sleep?"

Wednesday, December 17, 2003 – 5:07 pm

The guy who held this position before me, we'll call him J, is back in the office now. He is a Georgetown graduate in his early 30's and a total tech tool.

With upcoming Holidays off work and a huge project on the brink of launch, my bossi decided to take a load off my LJing ass and hire J for temp work. J's a pretty amicable guy, but in most respects I would regard him as... icky.

He sucks his teeth. Picks his teeth. Has yucky tarnished teeth. He did this all while sitting in front of my computer, groping my mouse, molesting my keyboard while showing me how to track my CPU performance. I can't imagine what he's doing while hovering in the opposite corner of the room. He's just your basic uncouth beast of a virgin.

Minutes ago he did the unspeakable. He casually strolled by my desk with a magazine tucked under his chubby arm, commenting on how he's excited to read the multipage story on one of our most well-known personalities at the station. Just sauntered out of the office. With a magazine. This could mean only one fucking thing.

I gasped.

We all went out to lunch earlier today, it was our office Xmas party. J had lambchops. He was gone for about 20 minutes with that magazine. You see what I'm getting at?

THE MAGAZINE WENT TO SHIT WITH HIM!

It's the office copy. After he's gone, the magazine will still linger around, emitting his fat shit cooties! I can't toss it because it features that important story about the personality-host-guy. I also can't throw it away because that would mean that I would have to handle his fecal contamination.

This leaves me with only one alternative, to set fire to the building and all of the scatological evil within it.

Thursday, December 18, 2003 - 5:00 pm

Observations of the Beast Virgin:

1. A mouth breather. A FUCKING MOUTH BREATHER. It's 2K3 for chrissakes! Can we get a little evolution in this hizzle?

2. He has quarter-inch long fingernails. Better to collect microscopic butt cheese with.

3. "I betchoo that this program still has lots of bugs in it, but they just released it early to compete in the market." Okay, we're not in the 5th grade, you don't have to assert your opinion by prefacing it with an "I betchoo..." I betchoo the only times he's seen tang is when he had to pay for it.

God, I am so going to hell. Maybe even beyond hell and into the inner depths of between his tarter encrusted molars.

In Cutey Boy Newz: Creepy Look-Look boy just peeked into my office while I was making a face that shouted, "I am mildly retarded. Please take me home to take care of me. Uh-Oh, Amy just messed her pants." And not in that cutey retarded face way either. Like, Beast Virgin retarded! Grrrr... Now Creepy Look-Look boy will never perform a romantic gesture for me. Like, say, holding up a sign through the glass panel that read, "Amy, I care not for your mental disabilities. Call me if you can comprehend this sign." And then he does that obnoxious hand-phone thing, where he holds up his pinky and thumb to his face to emulate a handheld telephone. Points at me, then to himself a few times. "You, me, phone, talky." *Super sigh* I don't even know his name even though I was standing right there when he was being introduced to someone else while I was bogarting their duplicator. *Triple sigh with a punch in the jib*

Friday, December 19, 2003 - 1:28 pm

Pet peeve of the workweek: Newsboy Hats

Dear women who wear Newsboy Hats (like the one who is chatting outside of my office, fashioning a beige version),

Please go home, look at yourself in the mirror and tell me what you see. Are you a 10-year-old boy from the early 20th century hawking sensationalistic news?

No? I didn't fucking think so. Take that silly cloth shit bucket off yer head. You are an affront to all anti-child labor activists and the poor third world kid who had to make that assbat.

Monday, December 22, 2003 – 4:27 pm

Utterances of the mildly deranged, or things I have actually said out loud to my own persons while at work.

-“He’s a cutey-ful. I’d go out with him” after running into shaggy-haired Asian dude in hall.

-“We’re losing her” after letting out a big yawn at the beginning of the workday.

-“I dunno... there are some serious things wrong with me” an introspective moment on the job.

During that holiday season, things began to turn around. Boss Lady was coming out of that overwhelming funk of bitchiness, but not all the way because then she wouldn’t be Boss Lady. We had a four-foot tall Doug Fir that I decorated it with leftover lights and shiny balls and it sat next to my desk so I was treated to a nostalgic scent everyday. I was also making friends and connections who shared gossip and listened to me vent.

Monday, January 12, 2004 – 2:43 pm

Within the past two working days, my producer has alluded, rather obnoxiously, to my getting preganis.

Friday: We’re testing out office chairs because the ones we have presently are disturbingly un-office-chairy (i.e. uncomfortable as all get out). A salesman came in with sample chairs and everything! So, I’m sitting/testing the chair that my producer had dubbed exclusively for chubby guys due to it’s wide width and proceeds to say to the salesman, “And she can sit on it too if she ever gets fat. Or pregnant.”

“Oh, yeah, it’ll be great for when I get knocked up.” Part of me wants to knock his face off, but I refrain.

Today: I walk to my desk and find a big empty gift basket sitting in my place. When the producer gets in, I ask him what that was about. He informs me, “Oh, the basket is for when you have a baby and need to put the kid in it to leave on the doorstep of a church or something.”

“Thanks, you jerk.”

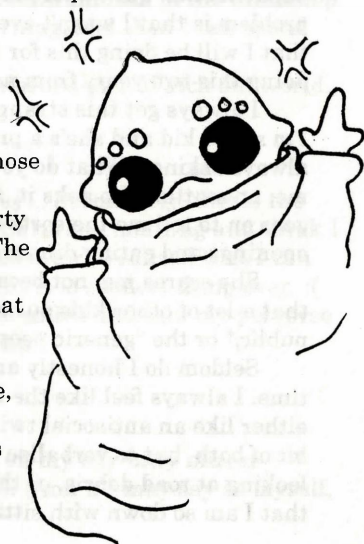
Does he know something I don’t?

Thursday, January 15, 2004 – 11:45 am

Holy my lord, psychedelic time thievery! All those right-wing conservatrcons should be protesting shit like this, stuff that’s funded with governmental dirty money in order to *gasp* entertain our chilluns!! The Teletubbies ain’t got nothing on BOOHBAH.

You know, it’s tough to grow up nowadays, what with the sex and obesity, and the sex among the obese, being shown all over television. Our dear chilluns, the attention-deficient peeps of our future, now have a single saving grace by the name of Boohbah. They look like circumcised peener heads peeking out of oversized sparkly turtle necks.

(Artistic rendering by moizies!)



Friday, January 16, 2003 - 12:39 pm

These past couple of weeks, some pretty interesting people have been showing up on the lot. Magic Johnson (he used to play b-ball, but now he plays the hiv), Philip Seymour Hoffman (gizzed onto wall in "Happiness" and tried to make out with Marky Mark in "Boogie Nights"), Judge Joe Brown (lower-echelon court show guy), Essie Mae Washington-Williams (Strom Thurmond's half-black love child), and Mandy Moore (America's national treasure #4029) among others. And it wasn't really that big of a deal until today when I noticed that the venerable Onion was doing something here!

Man, I is sooooo curious to see what they're doing! So, I figured, I could just write them directly and ask:

>>> i'm writing because i work on the KJOB lot and i noticed that the onion is doing something on our lot and i am so freaking curious!!! i think i'll ask around, but i figured that i could ask the source directly. WHAT ARE YOU DUDES DOING HERE?!!! <<<<

The Onion PR department replied with:

"Why, gathering news, of course.

Regards,

The Onion"

SWOON Liars are hot.

Thursday, January 22, 2004 - 1:18 pm

I just fell asleep. Standing up, leaning against the door of a bathroom stall. If only my mom coulda seen it... She would have cried.

Tuesday, January 27, 2004 - 12:55 pm

Aside from the fact that we are both alumni of the same university, she and I have nothing in common. In fact, her enthusiasm with her "fast-paced career" downright creeps me the fuck out. We work at the same place, different departments, but I guess my career should be just as "fast-paced" as well. The problem is that I wasn't even aware that I had a career. "Career" loosely means that I will be doing this for the rest of my life, right? I can't even imagine still doing this two years from now.

I always get this strange feeling that she has a superiority complex because I'm still a kid and she's a professional woman, but we're the same age. She's always asking, "What do you do for fun?" A question that has always bothered me, no matter who asks it, and from her it's even more annoying because she goes on to tell me the sorts of fun grown-up stuff she does, like going to gallery openings and eating dinners and skiing and going to touristy parts of SoCal...

She scares me, not because of of who she is personally, but because I know that a lot of other kids our age who are just like her. The GPs. The "general public," or the "generic people."

Seldom do I honestly answer a question about my "what do I do for fun" time. I always feel like the things I do to occupy my free time make me sound either like an antisocial twit or completely psychotic. Granted, I may be a little bit of both, but to verbalize to a GP kid that I like to walk around aimlessly looking at road debris, or that I enjoy riding the subway with no destinations, or that I am so down with sitting somewhere and just listening and writing things.

How do I respond to that puzzled look shooting back at me when I tell her that I like sauntering into loud bars, having a few beers by my lonesome and hoping that I won't have to utter a single word for the entire night?

I always get this strange feeling that she's accusing me of something, like she thinks I ought to grow up. I wear jeans and Jack Purcells to work everyday, she wears slacks and pointy heels.

Recently, she invited me to see a screening of "Osama," but I declined mostly because I didn't want to hang out with her and I say that "I'm not really in the mood for a depressing movie." I mean, it's about Taliban-ruled Afghanistan, how fun could it be? And she replies, quite snidely, "Well, I'm going because I'm politically-minded." Is it that easy now? Like, I can just go see a movie and then all of a sudden I'm some guerrilla freedom fighter?! Fuck, maybe I shoulda RSVPed... She made me realize that I am what's wrong with America today.

Thursday, January 29, 2004 – 11:39 am

This has got to be the longest work-week ever because all I can think about is my zine. Time slows down when you're sitting at work stapling and collating for someone else but daydreaming about stapling and collating my zine at home.

Last night, I copied-thieved the cover from the department across the hall. The whole time my heart raced out of my chest and my brain swirled around the room because I was so nervous about being caught. I tried to play it cool, just in case someone walked in while I was copying on bright yellow and green paper. All I could think was, "Amy, don't pee yourself, it's just copies," because I almost peed myself. At one point, I thought I might have actually leaked something from my reproductive organs because I was so anxious and delirious and incontinent.

Stealing time is a passive crime, it just involves not doing stuff when you ought to be. I'm just not cut out to steal tangible items, in this case it was toner and technology, since I even brought my own paper.

As you can see, I ain't no good at this *thing* stealing stuff, so the rest of the zine has been sitting at a copy shop waiting for the skillful touch of the printshop owner. If I'm lucky, it will be done by tomorrow morning, and then I can spend friday night geeking it up.

TWO issues, 150 copies each, one-borderline-retarded-girl. Watch out world, here comes more shitty stuff for you to sift through.

Friday, January 30, 2004 – 11:50 am

I woke up this morning thinking it was Saturday... Sermiously, this is the longest workweek ever!!!! Sometimes I wake up on Saturday morning and think I have to go to work, but then I'm pleasantly surprised after I realized that I can stay in bed until noon. But when the reverse happens it is saddest thing ever. :(

And last night, before I left work, the copy place called and said my perverse zine won't be ready until Saturday. Triple sad faces.

Monday, February 2, 2004 2:42 pm

Creepy Look-Look boy UPDATE

BWAHAHAHHAHA, I just checked myself out on my itty bitty mirror because CREEPY LOOK-LOOK boy just peeked in!!! (And if I may say so myself, I ain't looking too repugnant today. *Boast Boast*)

So here's the shizzle: Creepy Look-Look boy and I lock eyes at least once a day. While he's attacking his various production assistant assignments on his way in and out of our building, he makes sure to peek into my departmental domain quite often.

Last week I broke the fourth wall by waving to him, but it was completely unintentional. I was in a frenzy, calling across the country to hunt down some 50+ phone numbers and e-mail address of other box-jockies. I look up for a second, my retinas refocusing on something besides the telephone pad and I see a tall guy figure, I mistaken the figure for someone else. But it was CREEPY LOOK-LOOK BOY! I WAVED AT HIM! I BROKE OUR UNSPOKEN DONT-REALLY-SUPER-ACKNOWLEDGE-EACH-OTHER-BESIDES-THE-OCCASIONALLY-CROOKED-GRIN THING! Awe shit.

It wasn't even one of those like "Hi, how do you do?" eloquent waves. It was like, "HAPPY HAPPY SO GLAD TO SEE SOMEONE RETARD waves." You know, with mouth open, eyebrows raised and all that short bus stuff.

This afternoon, as I walked out of the kitchen, who should I see in the hallway but Creepy Look-Look. He greeted me. It was the first time I have ever heard his voice. I am such a geek.

Minutes ago, I walked into the restroom and out of nowhere the thought of me and him, making out while shoved up against the walls of the small mustard yellow stalls, just popped into my head. It was followed by this thought, "He'd be cuter if he got a haircut." Even in my spontaneous fantasies I have to be disturbingly critical.

Sweet Jesus. It's like the weirdest thing, this constant crush that will never go away because we can't really conceivably go out since we work in the same building (we don't even really work together). What will happen if it doesn't work out? Will he give me the finger every time he walks past my office?

I'd rather not know. I like this light-hearted pseudo-office-flirting thing. It's good for my mental well-being. But, I must admit, if he were to pull me into a stall, I'd be all over that shit like nipple at the Super Bowl.

Wednesday, February 4, 2004 - 3:58 pm

Every so often I am emboldened with a hearty feeling of, "Dude, I am so glad I went to high school. Like, that shit worked out for me." I had one of those moments today when I was doing an algebraic math equation:

$$500/5 = 24/x$$

X turned out to be .24lb (I was checking the perspective weight of my zine, thus calculating postage). You're wondering how I came up with that and why in the hell I couldn't just wait to get the zine and take it to the Post Office and weigh it there? Well, I'll tell you:

I like feeling like an old-school Asian by calculating things. You know, finally utilizing my brain that has historically (stereotypically) been built for shit like this.

The first thing I did was figure out how much a ream of 20 lb. bond paper weighs and through the plentifulness that is the internerd superhighway, I was able to surmise that a ream of 20 lb. bond paper does indeed weigh only 5 lbs. That is where the "500/5" comes from, "500 sheets of paper/5 honkin' pounds of tree love." "24/x" is "24 sheets of paper in the body of the zine/the mystery weight

of these papers." With some handy calculatin', it came out to .24 lbs. (Whew... chinky anyone?)

Like woah. In postal terms, it's about 3 ounces (2.88 oz to be exact, but the USPS rounds up). But I was just calculating the weight of the body of the zine and doesn't include all the other junk like the cover and envelope and etc it might come out to weigh more than 4 ounces. What all of this means is that the postage might come out to be \$1.29 which is just a little less than it costs to print the damned thing! Sigh-oh-rama.

But let's not kid ourselves, I already knew that I was going to lose some money doing this, but I'm hoping I won't lose too much and will at least try to break even. I hate creative ventures that guilt you into feeling bad if you want to break even. **FUCK YOU ZINE! IMMA BREAK EVEN! I DON'T CARE IF I HAD SO MUCH AWESOME RAD TIME FUN WHILE MAKING YOU, IT WILL ALWAYS BE ABOUT THE BOTTOM LINE!**

Sweet ma-jesus. Who's gonna pay **THREE BUCKS (PP)** for my silly little two-issued zine... I was hoping you would (Don't be such a cheap asshat, help a sista out. I'm trying to save money to make it to the PDX Zine Symposium so that I can hang out with all the print nerds and maybe get into a few bar fights.):

Tuesday, February 10, 2004 – 3:01 pm

In efforts to complete Mission: Amy Gets Healthy 2K4, I had a doctor's visit today. I received a prescription for more inhalers and some baby controllin' medicine. They also drew my blood and made me go potty in a clear plastic cup. Everything was pretty kosher throughout the entire visit until my French doctor started poking around my stomach as I laid flat on top of crinkly hospital paper bedsheets that proclaimed the virtues of Viagra.

First she taps my titters a bit, to make sure that I actually have breasts. She says she's checking for abnormalities, and I'm afraid that she means there's no way a person with two X chromosomes can have such small boobers.

Then she migrates down to my stomach and the following transpires:

"Joo've gaht a belly here. It's a beet fat."

"Uh, yeah. I'm workin' on it though."

"Joo must eat very vell."

"I do..."

So, it's official. Today I was clinically diagnosed with "Fat Belly." Sweet jesus self esteem.

Friday, February 27, 2004 – 3:18 pm

Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you...

Amy, lame duck of all seasons, the newest member of the "Young Men's Christian Association (of Metropolitan Los Angeles)."

I done it now, guys. I joined the Y. You know how in that episode of the Simpsons when Ed Bagel-ly Junior drives that car powered on his own sense of self-satisfaction? Well, I'm right there right now. Except, I probably only have enough sense of self-satisfaction to slightly nudge a dodge ball, which is actually kinetic energy, but I won't get into physics right now because I'm no physician. But what I'm talking about is this joy that my body is feeling from exerting physical energy. And the cherry on top is the fact that I don't have to feel guilty

for paying into an industry that guilts people into their gyms for eating bread.
My life is not-for-profit-driven.

See that cherry ball move, fuckers.

Tuesday, March 9, 2004 - 4:58 pm

Minutes ago: Sitting on toilet, picking at my belly button. Realized that the diagnosis of "Fat Belly" was indeed on point. Wished that I can get out of work just a little earlier so that I can go to the Y for the "Abs Only" class to cure myself of further bulbus bellitus. Pondered whether little children at home care that as they are watching our wholesome and educational programming that I am the picture of what they have to look forward to when they are grown and are using all of those fundamental magical skills that PBS taught them. I am the picture of what is down the road for those poor chilluns: sitting on a toilet, picking at my belly button. An out of shape belly button, at that.

Monday, March 15, 2004 - 6:05 pm

It's all fun and games until someone isn't sexually oriented in your direction.

holy crap. i'm almost heading out the door cause i have an "abs only" class at the Y that i'm madly in love with but i thought i'd make a post before i go. (you know, so i can get svelte and challenge my governor to a body building competition. have you seen those tabloid photos of that man? like woah! it looked like the body of kathy bates with his enormous austrian head propped on top? dude, if i get all oiled up and shit, even with my beer belly, i'm sure to beat him because i bet i look better in a banana hammock than kathy bates... BUT I DIGRESS.)

To the matter at hand: CREEPY-LOOK-LOOK boy came into my office, and LIKE TALKED TO ME AND SHIT! but now it's weird because i think he's into... SAME-SEX MARRIAGES! *WINK WINK* know what i mean?

listen, i don't want to fall on tired and discriminating stereotypes, but you know... but i can be wrong because my gaydar (as well as my transgender-dar) is totally wack and i'm really no expert in this field of discovery. but here is my evidence: the way he talks. it's subtle, but he speaks with a breathy high tone, not like fuckin' marilyn monroe or anything, but you know... evidence #2: i'm quite certain he was wearing a thumb ring. WHA? i don't even wear thumb rings!

but here's contrary evidence to his non-analage: he came in to talk to me to hand me the 2004 NCAA TOURNAMENT pool that his department has started. he wanted to see if i wanted in. keep in mind, FIRST TIME WE HAVE EVER REALLY HAD A CONVERSATION, and it's about a college basketball pool. WHA? (can i get a WHA? WHA?) he even took the time to fully explain it to me and wrote down his extension number on the sheet.

god damn! MIX SIGNAL MUCH?

either way, i don't think i need to be too concerned about this matter because i have stinky breath right now. so even if he was sexually oriented towards my direction, i'm sure he wouldn't make out with STINKY-BREATH-BREATH girl.

First Round
March 18, 19

(15) Vermont (22-8)

→ you are what
you pretend
to be
kant vonegic

x 5814

Wednesday, March 17, 2004 – 4:10 pm

Good news abound! In the business sector:

- Just got the super-okay for my vacation dates. Now allz I's gots to do is to shell out the cash for airfare. So right now, the plan is some odd days spent in the light of Gus's good cookin' and wandering around by my lonesome in P-town. Same shit, different city. Dates are tentatively 6/24-7/5.

+ Did you know that when you're like an adult and shit and you have a full-time job, that when you go on vacation, they still pay you? Like, seriously, I still get a paycheck after I've returned from getting really drunk for ten days. Dang. Sometimes this adult thing is SAH-WEET!

- I entered the NCAA pool thingy. I believe that the mere fact that I refer to it as the "pool thingy" says a lot about my chances to win. Actually, the producer and I went halfzies on it, \$2.50 each. At the moment, the pot is about \$100. The producer let me do all the pickin' (so he can sit back and watch the winnings come rollin' in.) My guess, is that the Okies has got it goin' on (beating out last year's champs, the Syracuzies.)

+ Some other teams I chose to win at the beginning of the tournament include Gonzaga, just cause I liked the sound of the school. Wake Forest makes it to the second round because their logo looks like the Weezer wings flying high above River's huge egotistical head.

Monday, March 22, 2004 – 2:52 pm

The producer and I are in second place in the NCAA Office Pool. This is the best \$2.50 I have ever spent on a work-related venture..(Which has incidentally turned into one of the top-5 time theft tools since I began working here.) We currently have 46 points out of a possible 64 (72%). The woman in first place, an "Ellen V," has 52 points. The producer and I are scheming up ways to psychologically mind-fuck her out of the game. Too bad our company is so disorganized and fractured that we don't even know who "Ellen V" is and she only works down the hall.

The producer left all of the details up to me and I predicted some unlikely upsets; like Liberty, the lowest ranking team in the East Rutherford division with a 18-14 record to beat out St. Joe's with an almost impeccable 27-1, merely because I didn't like it's religious affiliation; and Gonzaga got their asses spanked by Nevada, so the funny-sounding school will not bear the "NCAA Champs" prefix anytime soon.

However, I had two willy-nilly upsets that were super-awesome! I predicted Alabama (with a piddly 17-12 record) to beat out Stanford (29-1), and it happened! I wanted the southern kids to upset snooty Stanford kids. And Xavier (23-10), a team I favor due to their awesome XXXXX name kicked Mississippi State's (25-3) bootay.

This is all wonderful like lollipops and unicorns but something went awry while all this madness ensued. This appeared in the Excel grid that updates everyone's standings: "Ben S ELIMINATED** BY AMY L." Ben S, a.k.a. CREEPY LOOK LOOK boy, is out! He was eliminated by ME! If this isn't some sort of creepy foreshadowing about how we should never date (aside from the fact that we work at the same place), I'm not sure what is.

6:07 pm

It's happened. This very second. It happened.

I guess my big boss lady is going out with an associate tonight. She just walked in and plopped down on the couch across from me finishing up a cell phone conversation. After she wraps it up with her cell-mate, she looks at me and says, "So, how're you Amy?"

She knows who I am, however I am unable to return that courtesy. "I'm good and you?"

You see, I've been here for roughly eight months now. As a lowly "New Media Associate," few people who come in and out of here bother to remember my name. (Unless they're youngish guys from the web design firm who happens to meet me on the day I'm wearing a black tank top that lets my belly button peek out. And if you're said youngish guy, you say, "It is very nice to meet you," after we have been introduced, I will assume that you will remember my name at best. [Remember my belly button, at worst.]

So, this lady, who is sitting no more than 20 feet away from me as I am typing this, remembers who I am and I am at a loss as to who she is. It is both bothersome and awesome. But mostly awesome because I'm trippin' on this shizzle fo' rizzle.

Tuesday, March 23, 2004

If hell were furnished with fluorescent light.

In an office environment, everything not directly related to the work being done (i.e. peripheral activities to the office environment) become hyperboles. Since I have become interested in the NCAA tourney via the office pool, everyone in my department has dubbed me as the fiendish gambler. There's word about how they want to buy me a transparent green visor and take me to the tracks. Ha ha, you are so funny.

I become this two-dimensional drone: Amy works and then she bets on the tournament!!! Ha ha ha, look! She is so funny! Ha ha ha! We don't know anything about Amy except that she likes to wear red and has to come into work a half hour earlier than the rest of us. And now we know that she likes to gamble because she bet on the tournament. Man, that Amy. She is so crazy. Don't bet the house!

It makes everything easier. It helps alleviate the guilt when you throw a tantrum; when you ask me to stay late to do work that can be done the next day but you're so anal retentive you haven't shat in months; when you don't have enough balls to stand up for yourself and create more work for the both of us. Because, when I'm just a two-dimensional drone I'm only Amy who works at the office and the bets on the tournament, and it won't be such a big deal if I have to do a little more work. She can stave off the gambling for just a little while.

Thursday, March 25, 2004 - 4:02 pm

One of the major benefits about this job is its super-human internet connection. I am catching up on "Fresh Air" segments and the Triumph The Insult Dog show made Terry Gross snort three times! Straight up, like geeky laughy snort. Woah.

I want to marry Robert Smigel. And then we can have play fights on our California King sized bed (we can afford it because he created a puppet dog that

is very successful, you know.) During our cuddle sessions, he can break out Triumph and insult me saying things like, "Oh, Amy, please don't eet me. I know your people like to eat my people. Here, let me steek you with my cigar instead." I would laugh until my belly exploded at which time we would make mad scientist love. God, that would be hot.

Monday, March 29, 2004 - 9:50 am

The silver bullet is some lethal shit, yo. Five or six of them ricocheting inside of my fat head and small frame.

I am on three hours of sleep. A dull, throbbing headache is tunneling through the surface wrinkles on my soft brain. Man, this sucks.

Why doesn't the workplace have like "Alcohol Recovery" days? Like Sick days or Vacation days, this is just as vitally important to the safety and well being of all worker bees.

"Yeah, dude, listen, I had a rough time last night. Chasing whiskey with whiskey is f'n brutal on my constitution. You know what I'm talking about, heh heh. Anyway, I won't be coming in today. Gonna sit around and sleep s'more and catch up on my stories."

Tuesday, March 30, 2004 - 3:24 pm

Fucken pervert habits of mine. I just caught myself feeling myself up. Again.

Occasionally, I will find myself in a trance-like state, hammering away at all the of the important things they have sent me here to do, and then out of nowhere, I'm feeling my bra outline. Then I'm feeling between my bra. Then my hands are possessed by some 13-year-old boy who is much too eager.

Then I realize, "I'M AT WORK." As if feeling yourself up isn't retarded enough, but to do so absent-mindedly while you're working, is surely a sign of something netherworldly. (Do they hand out handicap parking placards for symptoms such as mine? I mean, how can I continue to drive around a parking lot when my free hand is on my titters? Let me park already, bitch!)

Perhaps, in a past life, I was a woman trapped inside of a man's body. And now I am constantly subconsciously reaffirming that I was indeed born with a fairly normal vagina. But the joke's on me, courtesy of God, because that ne'er do well gave me the body of a ten-year-old boy and no amount of the feely-feelies will ever satiate that man from my past life.

That's why I's keep on at it.

Wednesday, March 31, 2004 - 2:29 pm

Mark, the IT guy, drops by the big boss lady's office to discuss our connectivity problems. He's a portly man, in his early 40's. For a while, he used to regale me with drinking stories about how crazy he got at "mansions in the Hollywood hills" and the days he served in some butt rock band.

He looks like a lower-middle class version of Donald Trump minus the self-assurance, charm and models firmly attached to his wiener. However, he does possess the Donald hair: limp, wiry, few and far between. Except Mark hasn't opted for the "rolling hillside" comb over look, he would much prefer a mullet.

After Mark leaves following a brief meeting with boss lady, she comes out of her office and asks, "Does Mark have a mullet?"

In unison everyone answers, "Yes!"

"Why does he do that? It looks horrible," she says. I just sit at my desk, mouth agape, suppressing any audible laughter.

The producer blurts, "Because mullet equals freedom!"

I work with geniuses.

"Mullets equal freedom fries," he continues.

Ladies and gentlemen, your generous tax dollars at work.

2:59 pm

Memo to company, from IT:

FYI

Please turn off all unauthorized applications on your computers:

These include: Instant Messenger, Weather, Radios, Video Streaming..

ETC,,,,

Thanks,

I.T.

BASTARDS!!!!!!!!!! So, now what??!! HUH??!! WORK??! WORK...

AWE FUCK. Perhaps this is karmic revenge for that mullet story. BUT IT WAS WORTH IT, ASSMULETS!

Thursday, April 8, 2004 - 4:59 pm

I just totally called my Manager, "The harbinger of lame." Like, to his face and shit.

Friday, April 23, 2004 - 3:06 pm

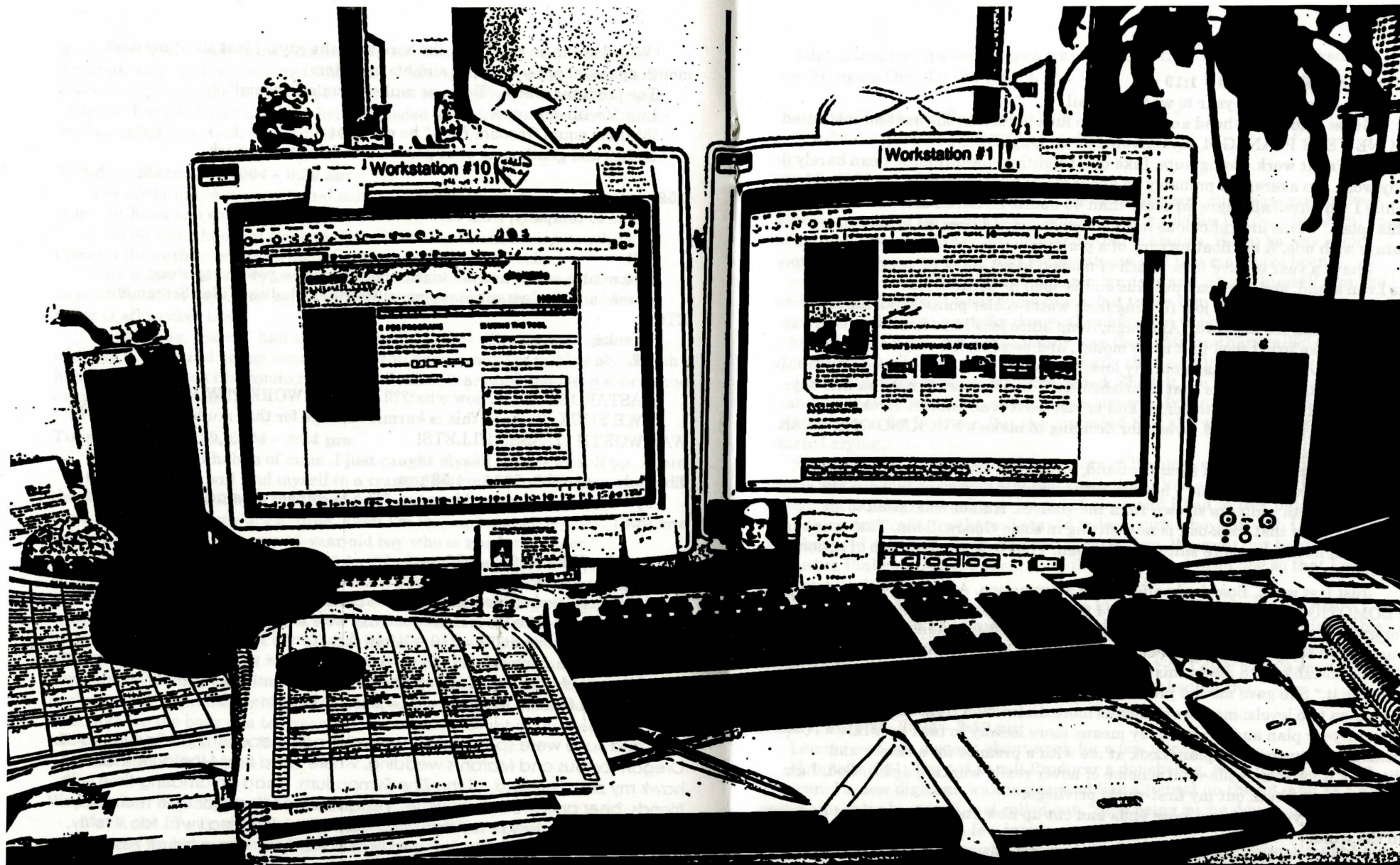
If I were a masterful scientist, I would invent a machine that could measure one's level of productivity through electromagnetic fields. Its output would simply rate the level of productivity with a simple number system:

1 = "Pro-duct-what?" and 10 = "Holy shit, You're like a robot!"

If such a machine existed, its platinum dildo-like wand would wave over me, absorbing my electromagnetic output and then spit out the results:

-6 = "You fucking twat. Get off LJ and get back to work."

May and June were spent planning my first paid vacation. I visited Portland, Oregon for Gus and Marah's wedding, where I had Best Man duties, and to hawk my zine, Lululand, at the Zine Symposium. I had an amazing time with friends, beer and the summertime. I ended up staying a couple more days, paid extra to rearrange my flight and called in sick saying I was too ill to fly. The truth was that some friends and I just started a shotgun band, Assisted Living Dracula, and we had a five-song, five-minute set to play at a basement show that I wasn't going to pass up to get back to work. Those two weeks changed me. The time off and away from the small doses of radiation emitting from my computer and going blind from staring at my monitor gave me a chance to breathe fresh air and see all the things I was missing out on because I thought I was doing what everyone else did. Grow up, get a job, work, retire, die. That time off reminded me of who and what I am—a goofy girl with larger dreams who shouldn't be stifled by a 40+ hour work-week chained to a desk.



grow up, get a job, work, retire, die.

Monday, July 12, 2004 - 1:19 pm

You have a whole year to watch me fail.

Guess who went ahead and decided to fuck herself in the ass and instituted a ONE-YEAR PLAN? God, my naiveté is sooo laughable.

So, I'm at work. Going nuts. Like quiet-fighting apeshit nuts. I can barely do any work. On average, I probably do about 20-30 hours of actual work a week, while I am physically here for more than 40 hours. So here I am, stewing about this "plan." Plans are ridiculous lies to ourselves and I decided to shit on my future with one. A big floating turd of a plan too.

I have a year to save up a bunch of money, to get rid of as many possessions as I can stand, and then call out Gus on his open invitation. I have a year to work my last office slave job, retiring from water-cooler politics indefinitely, even if it is working for Big Bird. (Although, temp office jobs have not been ruled out because I like to eat food that costs money, and besides, it's only temporary... right?) I have a year to hash out my love/hate affair with Los Angeles, my family and the nostalgic suburbs that nourished me. I have a year to not run into boys that I had already ran into before and to just leave well enough alone.

I have a year to curse myself for deciding to make a FUCKING ONE-YEAR PLAN.

The second I got back from Portland, I attacked my bookshelf. My bags weren't even unpacked, and I had already created a hurricane mess in my apartment with contents strewn from the shelves. Half of what used to sit amicably upon that dark oak is now sitting in some Goodwill bin. That was easy. But I still have a lot more shit to go through. That was my first stab of action at the plan.

Just last week, Boss Lady offered me a promotion. A FUCKING PROMOTION and I had to be honest, I told her that I was only going to be here for another year (as I had committed to a two-year stint when they hired me last summer.) I said, "If you think I can still handle these responsibilities and you feel comfortable with me in this position knowing that I'll only be here for a year, I can do it." She gave me the promotion even with my caveat. This is awesome for me on two levels: more work means more distraction from the actual length of the one-year plan and more money means more leeway to fuck up while instituting my one-year plan. Look at me with a premise for a career and ditching it for some wide-eyed scheme of never really working again. God, I am an American, check out my first-world privilege.

I have a year to tie up loose ends and cut up new ones to leave them flapping in the wind.

Oh yeah, to kick everything off, and to certify that I am a complete dork, I went ahead and got a red pitchfork tattooed up my asscrack. Good god, life is grand.

Tuesday, July 13, 2004 - 12:52 pm

HA! So, now that I'm all fancy pants "Associate Producer" of a piddly website for a daily news show, I have to like, "meet" with people now. Well, like, "meet" with my Producer. This is how I "scheduled" our "meeting."

"Turns out that 3:30 is okay, so you and I can hang out."

HANG OUT!

I did introduce "Awesome" as a way of affirmation, maybe I can schedule more "Hanging Out" for the future.

I say to Producer, "Professionalism is overrated."

"Professionalism is profane," he replied.

July 16, 2004 - 11:53 pm

A couple months ago my doggie, a German Shepard mix, was "put to sleep." Bouncer was about 10-12 years old, which is pretty old for big dogs like him, and had an undiagnosed kidney problem and other maladies. When he was about two-years-old, the poor thing had kidney stones and this may have been a recurrence. He was suffering, hadn't eaten for days and peeing himself. For the past five years I haven't been home much, but to see him like that was unbearable and I gave my folks the go ahead for him to be euthanized. They did it while I was at work, my whole family was there. My brothers called me up, crying, asking again and again if it was really the best idea. I said it was.

I was still at work when my mom called. She left the vet's office because she couldn't bear to watch. She was balling as she was driving home. I didn't think she cared much for Bouncer, but she confessed that she was starting to miss him. I started crying.

So, yesterday, I trudged up the memory of Bouncer so that I had an excuse to miss work. I called in early and told them that I had a small family emergency, my dog was going to be put to sleep and I had to trek out there.

I didn't trek out anywhere. I stayed in bed, with a boy instead. I got a few more hours of sleep to recoup from the night before. We went out to lunch and listened to Pinhead Gunpowder. I used the spirit of my dead dog so that I could skip work and get some.

Ben said the secret to lying at work is to not downright lie, but to just stretch the truth and be vague about everything else. He's used the spirit of his dead grandmother on more than one occasion. "She did die. That much is true."

I don't feel too bad about it all considering that A) I didn't use a dead person as an excuse 2) I'm pretty sure my dog was hella stoked for me.

Friday, July 23, 2004 - 3:50 pm

Lemme just mind vomit about work for a few minutes...

Note to self #1: Try not to call Producer a douchebag, even if he is one. He just scored a new digicam, walking around like a tourist on the lot, and as I was giving him shit about it, it just rolled out, "Stop being such a douchebag" right in front of the manager and a few interns.

Note to self #2: Try to curb extreme hatred for intern A--. Sure, I caught her taking a shit this morning and stinking up the joint. Sure, she's a pushy ladder-climber, a picture of everything I fear my peers have become. Sure, she's lazy and totally fell in sleep in front of me the other day (and I have phone cam images of it too... I'll post a montage one day). Sure, I have valid petty reasons to really dislike her busted ass, but she's working for free, so lay off.

Noteworthy: We have a new site editor who is working on one of our latest projects. He's a cool dude, who keeps giving me the Rock-Out/Devil-Horn gesture whenever he sees me cause I have a red ponytail and listen to punk rock at work.

Anyway, we were just chatting about his wife and daughter and junk like that when he asks me, "So, do you have a boyfriend, or girlfriend, or anything?"

"Nope, not right now. Why? You got someone in mind?"

"What're you looking for?" He inquires.

I was just so stoked that he asked if I had a girlfriend that a personal question like that didn't bother me at all. So, here's to the new site editor with eyes like a nine-year-old!

Thursday, July 29, 2004 - 3:16 pm

Did I ever tell you guys about the time I pissed off half of my office? It was right after I got back from vacation and I went on this huge rant about how I was "quitting the real world."

I told the Producer and Manager that office bureaucracy and water cooler politics were oppressive on this otherworldly level.

-That florescent light was evil and make me fat.

-That the reason that worker bees are worker bees are because they're insects and can't think beyond fucking, eating and being a worker bee.

-That, I am in fact a girl and not an insect, and I have a brain that makes coming into a stifling workplace even more unbearable.

I spewed all of this and they didn't like swimming in it. The Manager said that I was basically talking shit on their lives and careers. Sure, I was, and I was saying that I don't have that sort of patience to live like that for the next 60 years. The Producer, who has been my office ally since day one, made a veiled threat. In an omnipresent, passive-aggressive voice he said, "If a person feels that way about their work, then maybe that person should quit and then the company can hire someone else who is more interested in the work..."

I'd threaten my ass too. A young whippersnapper coming into your livelihood and telling you that it's all bullshit and unicorns is probably the last thing you want to hear when you've known that for years but were afraid to verbalize it.

Last friday night I spent some obligatory outside work time with some co-workers. I told D-- and the other worker bees about how I gave my boss a one-year notice.

She laughed, "So, what're you gonna do then?"

"Nothing! I don't ever want to work like this again."

"You're basically going to retire?!"

"I guess so... Dude, I'm going to retire at 24!"

She just shook her head. I know she can understand what I want to do on a basic level, but her idea of my life after "retirement" is sitting at home watching Sally Jesse Rafael and eating bons bons. (Seriously, she said that.) As if life is no more than working and dieting and consuming. (She has been coveting some luxury sedan for a while now.) She makes me shake my head too, check out this mass e-mail she sent:

"I would like to buy Los Angeles Opera season tickets. I am happy to go alone but if anyone wants to go with me that would be even better. I plan to see: Carmen, La Boheme, Aida, Romeo et Juliette (maybe) So, any of my cultured friends interested in attending a show or two with me? Tickets are \$75.

Cheers, D--"

Like how she wrote, "cultured friends"? *Shakes head* The best part is that she's so great at playing adult that she'd forgotten about doing basic adult things

like paying bills. She can afford these "cultured" activities because she lives at home with her mom and little brother.

What can I say? I just don't make the cut. She saunters into work in expensive pointy-toe heels, while I limp in \$2 Jack Purcells from the thrift store.

Friday, July 30, 2004 - 2:47 pm

EEEEK!

I have just become an advocate for "Executive Washrooms."

As disturbingly bourgeois as the concept may be, they're a good idea. I just had to sit in a stall next to the Boss Lady as she fire-hosed the fucking toilet. Imagine if you cranked your garden hose on super extreme power and stuck your thumb in the middle of the spout to pressure it into some crazy-hurt-somebody spray action, that's what Boss Lady was doing... WITH HER VAGINA!!!

I'm a visual person by nature, so when I heard her urine crashing against the porcelain, I imagined it vividly. The spread of her legs, her urethra opening to five times it's resting size, the force of her stream!

What the fuck is wrong with me?

I bolted out of there, with lingering thoughts to how wrinkled it must be...

Monday, August 2, 2004 - 2:20 pm

Does someone have a case of the Mondays? Har har, please kill yourself. Actually, my Monday has been pleasantly... not so bad.

Here's a running tally of the things I've done so far while at work today:

01. Morning website maintenance updates
02. Talked to Gus for about 20 minutes. He told me that there's only one copy of Lululand left at Powell's, which made me super happy!
03. Staff meeting where I:
 - a) made a list of to-dos this week for work (and not for work)
 - b) made a list of all the billz I have to pay once I get paid (it ain't pretty)
 - c) tried to think about Lululand, but my mind kept going back to billz
04. Talked to Gwynn, the only co-worker I will name, about Tropic of Cancer and I told her how insanely awesome it is. We also discussed whether Anais Nin is a feminist writer by default of her sexy writing.
05. Browsed eBay for cute dresses
06. Checked out craigslist to see how much used mattresses are going for nowadays, because I dunno if I can lug my beautiful, and disturbingly comfortable bed with me to PDX, so I may have to sell it to the lowest bidder
07. Did some intermittent cinchy coding
08. Ate peanut butter and jelly sammich
09. Googled "'how to" "open jar"' and found nothing useful (I have a jar of yummy delicious organic apricot jam at home, and the jam jars are notoriously difficult to open! it usually takes me three days to free the lid. I dunno what i'm gonna do for lunch tomorrow because this is only day one of the struggle)
10. Tried to find Cantonese courses in Los Angeles, then realized I wasn't fooling anyone and decided that I'll continue to be a shameful ABC instead
11. Wrote some "personal" e-mails
12. Assigned work to intern
13. Overheard the Producer call his 80-year-old dad "an idiot."
14. Made a tattoo appointment tonight

daily fat intake
supposed to be
75g.

Dream Jobs

- Foley artist
- Handwriting Expert/
Forensic Scientist
- CEO & Pres./Owner &
Operator of
Ice Cream Truck
- Ethno-Sociologist

STAKES

To order:

- Fine point sharpies
- ~~we~~ velcro ties
- CDs
- binder clips

web promotion transform

- (loop) → media, programming, history
- splashdots adserver.com
6 viral

dustbait.com #shell

15. Got nervous about tattoo appointment tonight
16. Convinced Corey to cover my ass as the merch kid for The Mormons show this Friday so that I can work The Clorox Girls (!!!) show instead
17. Tried to call Rafael to tell him that I can work the Clorox Girls show, but he no answer
18. Changed tampon
19. Decided to make a retard list of things I have done thus far
20. After reading list, realizes that I might be an idiot for quitting this job next year to "retire"

Tuesday, August 3, 2004 - 10:47 am

Today's lunch is going to be a peanut butter and APRICOT JELLY sammich! Hurrah, the lid was freed!

However, it was not done with my hands. Megan suggested that I whack the bottom of the jar a few times or run the lid beneath warm water. I tried both of her suggestions and failed miserably. So I opted for Feminist option B, which was to chuck the jar of jam into my purse and find a man to the job.

When I met up with Corey at the tattoo shop, I handed him the jar. "Please open this." He unscrewed it with little to no effort.

"Did you bring the jelly just for me to open?"

"Well, yeah."

And that was the end of that conversation.

Monday, August 9, 2004 - 3:12 pm

I started another "Monday Tally Up Yo" list of things I have/haven't done at work. Here's an abbreviated version:

Hi/Lo-lights during weekly staff meeting:

-Trying not to fall asleep, while the other four staff members ramble about "things to do"

-Thinking about boy(s)

-Trying to not think about certain boy(s)

-Remembered dream I had about cutting my bangs

-Wondering if anyone could tell that I wasn't paying attention, but was instead making this ludicrous list

-Wondering if Henry Miller was a good fuck

-Wondering if I'm too much of a wuss to have a fuck buddy

-Googled "Warren G. Harding" to see what number president he was (29th)

-Just realized that Warren G. Harding's name has "Warren G." in it.

-Wondering if that gangster rap artist, Warren G, is aware of the fact that he's a rip-off of our 29th President.

-Wondering if Warren G. Harding was a good fuck

Tuesday, August 10, 2004 - 5:07 pm

I was thinking about the awake-time that I spent at work versus the awake-time that I spend in my apartment and realized that I should probably stop thinking about it because the figures are rather disheartening.

Q: What hurts more than paying bills?

A: Sending in your checks with "I [HEART] U' Candy Hearts" stamps affixed to the envelopes.

6:07 pm

Corey's here right now, lounging and reading the new David Sedaris book. He asks what kinda server we use to house our beautius site and I don't know (even though I probably really should, considering I am web maintenance.)

So, I call Producer.

"What is our server made out of?" I ask.

"What?"

"Sugar and spice and everything nice? I mean... like what is it?"

"A Linux server, you mean?"

"Yes. Cool. My friend Corey is here, he asked and I didn't know."

"Oh... You sound really happy right now."

Producer begins to insinuate that perhaps I'm in a good mood because Corey's my boyfriend. Ooohhh. Corey and I broke up a year ago, now we're best friends and fucking other people.

"He's going out with an 18-year-old right now. We're just friends."

This prompts Producer to come over and greet Corey and ask, "So, hey, you're going out with a tramp?"

Then he walks away.

Wednesday, August 11, 2004 - 6:31 pm

Workee Bee

Status: Still stuck at work

Scene: Women's restroom

Me: Washing my hands after a #1

Uttered to myself: "I have to go. I have to go have sex."

Tuesday, August 17, 2004 - 12:06 pm

Bless your little heart, technology.

I know I haven't said it much lately, but Internet, I fuckin' love you.

Without you, I wouldn't have a job where I poke and prod at you all day long. Where I surf your fiber optic highways and take and take and take. Darlin', you the one.

Check out all the awesome stuff we did together, just today, just within the past two hours of me being at work:

We looked at more cute dresses on eBay. Do you think I ought to get that one? Yeah, it's really cute and delicious, but I think my boobies are too small for it. The description says it fits up to a 38" bust, and sweetie, you know I'm barely pushing 35". God, I wonder sometimes, how come you treat me so well when my tits are so tiny. I know there are a whole gang of big-boobied whores all over your shit, Internet, but why you choose to stick it out with me, I'll never know.

You took me to myspace.com where I left a message for a friend, apologizing for being a drunken moron on Saturday. I dunno what I'd do without you, I'd be left feeling guilty about accosting people into having a threesome with me.

I got to hear that beautiful ode of a song, "Album of the Year" by The Good Life, on that Boulder college radio station that you are so sweet to webcast right into my box here at work. If I didn't have all these crazy firewalls and IT breathing down my neck, I bet you'd make it so that I could illegally download that entire record. You are such a fucking sweetheart.

Now, I'm going to go read a book on my lunch break now... Please don't be like that. Baby, I still love you, but you can't give me books. Yes, I know, you help me look up books on that "stanky ass" lapl.org, but darlin', don't be jealous. I'll always come back to you. How else will I post inane, insane ramblings like this on my LJ?

Awe shit.

Boss Lady informed me today that my raise was even more than she had told me a couple days ago. I'm grappling with it right now because I have NEVER ever felt guilty about working here, but this pay-hike is starting to jab me in the eye. Dang. And I can't tell my folks because they would probably murder me and make me eat my own intestines if they knew how much money I'll be making, yet in less than a year I have chosen to live like a bum instead.

Red hoodie and VELCRO (TM) shoes!

Yup, it happened.

HAHAHahhahahHAHAHahhahahHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA.

He was on the phone with his wife when I walked into his office and let out an exaggerated exasperated sigh. He smiled at me and then KICKED ME IN THE SHIN!

I ain't no scientist or anything, but I do believe that when necktie zombies refer to "a case of the Mondays" they are talking about uncontrollable yawning and the full-body hurt of just being awake. Goddamn, how do people do this their entire lives?

When I first started here, we would do a "What did you do this weekend?" debriefing before our weekly Monday morning staff meetings. That lasted about three weeks and I guess we all got tired of feigning interest in each other's lives.

And sometimes, it's sorta depressing to verbalize all the laziness that you embodied on your time off. Besides, we've got important business to discuss! Like, uh, work and stuff. Every now then though, we still do the "weekend" talk, and most times my version of my weekend activities is very abbreviated because I just don't like divulging my secret life as an existentialist superhero.

Tuesday, August 31, 2004 - 1:50 pm

I am listening to the Strong Bad song a college radio station, bopping my head, going over the revised version of my "Job Analysis." It outlines my responsibilities, my skill level and other related junk. It's also the spark that will blow up my paycheck.

In the hizzy, fo shizzy, my nizzy.

But I am pretty feeling scummy about it because I'm wearing a dusty faded navy hoody, a dirty hot pink t-shirt, a red-white-blue flag football belt, avocado-stained jeans and dumpstered white chuck taylors (MADE IN THE U.S.A.). I am almost anti-professional. And I'm falling asleep.

I ought to think about making business cards that read, "AMY LAM, EXISTENTIALIST SUPERHERO, BANANARCHY, INC."

Tuesday, September 7, 2004 - 1:02 pm

I've been telling people that I've been drunk for three months, or at least it's felt that way, what with the hangovers and actual drunkenness. It's amazing I'm still employed and that I'm still such a goddamned terrific employee. "Terrific!" Imagine me saying that, with my thumb sticking out and swinging it round and round. I am such a terrific employee that I dragged my yellow ass into work on SUNDAY! Yessir, I came into work on the Sunday of Labor Day weekend. How completely apropos. We were/are on "monster deadline" (*GROOWLLL*) and so I came in on Sunday, got reamed in the ass by Big Bird for about nine hours, with a slight hangover/residual drunk from the days before.

Since this is my "work journal," I contemplated writing on post on Sunday. But the fact that I was there on SUNDAY and that I had WORK TO DO, I decided against it. I'm not sure why I'm writing about how I didn't write on Sunday, but I'm doing it anyway and it's disconcerting. I am unthinking for the time being. You'll have to excuse me.

Thursday, September 9, 2004 - 4:46 pm

EEEEK

I think that half of my department just totally heard me say, "I don't think I can reach my cervix."

YIKES!

Wednesday, September 15, 2004 - 11:03 am

I've been working here for more than a year now. I've slouched through 40+ hour work-weeks; the mind-numbing commute; weekly lobotomies that we call 'staff meetings'; listening to bad jokes and worst truths.

Having given up so much of myself here, one thing still eludes me:
BUSINESS CARDS

Hey, don't I deserve a piece of stock card announcing "what I do"? C'mon now! Truth be told, however, if I had more initiative and REALLY cared I would

just get off my ass and do it myself. In the meantime, I've have compiled a list "titles" that would follow my piddly name:

amylam, candyass
amylam, incredible human being
amylam, esq.org
amylam, esq.org.orgy
amylamcandyass
amylam, brassy
amylam, WOMAN
amylam, bored
OR

amylam, incrediblehumanbeing, candyass, esq.org.orgy/existential
superhero

Thursday, September 16, 2004 - 1:15 pm

Producer and I are discussing the legalities of posting a student film on one of our peripheral sites. I tell him that I am unsure of the legalities and that we should get all bureaucratic on this shit and check with legal.

Then I say, "You're the one who makes me paranoid. You're like bad weed."

Monday, September 27, 2004 - 4:17 pm

D-- just stopped into my offices on her daily jaunt about the lot. She wanted to know why I can't make it to this Thursday's "Matador dinner" (we're all fellow Matadors, courtesy of our alumni.) I just told her that something came up and I couldn't go, because the truth is that I'm going to some workshop thingy for some pipe-dream job that I'd rather not talk about now due to jinx-fear.

She paused for a second, squints her eyes at me and says, "You look different."

I didn't want to tell her it's probably because I haven't brushed my hair in more than a year and it wasn't up in a ponytail and is way poofy today. Instead, I replied with a coy, "Oh, really?"

She raised a brow when she asked, "Are you pregnant?"

Without skipping a beat, I bring my pointer finger and thumb up to my face, hold my fingers an inch apart and say, "Just a little pregnant."

She smirked and her brow stayed arched.

Sometimes workplace banter crosses these lines that are so fun to race beyond.

Wednesday, October 6, 2004 - 11:42 am

Jobby-junk:

-Weirdness abound. This past Saturday the Boss Lady hosted a party to celebrate the launch of a new site and I was recruited to make spring rolls. Since I'm so good at planning junk, on the Friday night beforehand I only stayed up until about 4:30 AM knowing full well that I would have to get up at 9:00 to roll some springs and shit. When I finally made it to my boss's house, I was still hungover and not completely sober.

-I called in sick on Monday because when I woke up I just didn't feel like going into work. And as fate would have it, Mike Napkin (the drummer for the short-lived Assisted Living Dracula), called me as he was making his way into

Union Station. I hopped on the Metro myself and bought that fucker some yummy Chinatown lunch. Then I bought paper-cigarettes for Bradley, you know, so he can smoke that shit when he goes to hell.

Tuesday, October 19, 2004 - 2:04 pm

Just slightly ridiculous:

Have I told you guys lately about how my job is FUNDED BY VIEWERS LIKE YOU. Like, without your honky asses tootin' this shit, I'd be out unemployed, flaunting my flabby wares for dollars and change. Thanks, dudes!

But have I also told you guys what fucking cheapskates you are? Because your fundage is, like, way under par, assholes. This weekend it rained, which is a huge fucking fiasco in Southern California because our tans wash out, our flip-flops don't keep our toes dry, and we can't drive worth a sea lion on those slickety roads. And here, at your local PBS Affiliate, an entire building flooded out. Keep in mind that there are only about three main buildings on this lot, and the Administration building, where all the papers get pushed and the calculators clack, was flooded out on all three floors. Ankle-deep seepage from the walls! Wanna know why? Mostly because of VIEWERS LIKE YOU. See, we've been remodeling that building for about a year now, and since we don't have much fundage, we hired the lowest bidder or some construction crew resembling the lowest bidder, and when it started raining they decided the patch some 30-odd little holes on the roof of the building with.... CARDBOARD. Hey, you don't have to be an educated PBS viewer to know that CARDBOARD, which is basically really thick paper, doesn't block out water, which is basically WATER THAT GOES THROUGH PAPER!

Now all of the little worker bees from that building have migrated into our building, our offices, my space. And they talk a lot. I can't even hear this awful thrash music I have shooting out of my speakers.

And I don't think I've reminded you lately, that I have to PAY FOR PARKING here. I have to pay to park my car on the lot at my place of employment. Twenty fucking dollars a month, \$240 a year!

So, yeah, what I'm trying to say is that next time you're watching some awesome NOVA episode about bionic babies who eat mummies in an attempt to solve some evolutionary mystery concerning cocaine, just think about all the worker bee schlubs who play internet all day and don't do any real work... and have to pay for parking.

Really hella lame:

Sometime last week, while i was enjoying some free yummy Mac & Cheese lunch with my fellow co-workers, we came to discussing the film, "Before Sunset." It's got Ethan Hawke and that famished looking blonde non-American woman in it. So, Manager shows us this website with a review of the film. We read the fucking thing, which I shall paraphrase for you here; it said something about the movie reviewer running into a girl with whom he had a gone out a few dates. But this time when he saw her, she was on another date with *another guy*, rollerblading in Venice beach. Somehow this is a segue into a film review, which is neither here nor there. Anyway... back to the story:

After we read this film review, he asks, "So you wanna know the weird thing about this?"

"Uh, yeah, I guess," we're all only about half interested. And since there were three of us, I guess we were one and a half interested in all.

"I'm the other guy," he said with a goofy grin sticking out from his face.

"The what?"

"The guy on the date with her."

"Ooooh" all around the table.

So, while everyone is digesting the fact that Manager dude managed to be mentioned as "the other guy" in some obscure dude's movie review page on the world wide web, all I can think is, "WHAT THE FUCK? HE WENT ON A ROLLER BLADING DATE?! HE ROLLER BLADED! AS A FORM OF CONNECTING WITH ANOTHER HUMAN BEING! WHAT THE FUCK?"

But I didn't say anything because that would just be rude to tell your manager that you think he's the biggest square since the invention of geometry. And seriously, if there were ever a moment where I thought it would be appropriate to slap some sense into him, that was the time.

Wednesday, October 20, 2004 - 4:03 pm

The best joke I ever heard at work was from The Producer:

What's the best part about having sex with 47-year-olds?

There's forty of 'em!

Ow! Bada-bing, va-voom.

He came back later with a joke, but no punchline.

He asked, "What's the worst part about having sex with 46-year-olds?"

I answered, "They're not as good as the 7-year-olds."

5:17 pm

One of the semi-good things about being forced to share office space with the rest of the company is that you actually get to know the other people who work here. Because, for the most part, we're pretty insular within each department like some dysfunctional family who doesn't want other families knowing about the shit we're flinging at each other.

One of the worst parts about being forced to share office space with two other departments is that you actually get to know the other people who work here. Oh my god.

There's L-, who never really bugged me before because I didn't even know her name before she moved in about twenty feet from me. I have to listen to her make business phone calls and it makes me want to smother her with my feet. During short intervals in her conversation she leaks out this empty, vacant laugh. The fakest laugh your ears will ever digest. The kind of laugh you do when you're faking a laugh on purpose. And she sings "Thank you," like she's some sort of whimsical fairy, soft fingers wrapped around a wand topped with a star.

P- is one of those women who wants to get her two cents into everything. Even if you've already got all the change in the world, she'd still like to toss her fucking pennies at you. A perma-frown-smirk thingy is plastered to her face and last night she warned that I best be getting home soon because, "my husband said that it's going to rain THREE INCHES tonight. Can you believe THREE INCHES?" At the time she said this, the rain was pouring pretty heavily. She

looked out the window and uttered, "I don't know how. But my husband's always right. Why is he always right?" She looked a bit sad too.

R- waddles like an overstuffed penguin and perpetually looks like he just finished watching six hours of porn. I know this isn't like a look that's very prevalent, the "watched six-hours of porn" look. But with R-, it is definitely a very tangible look.

And then there's me. Perpetual asshole to the muppet stars. I just said out loud, "Vaginal Bleed Davis."

Friday, November 5, 2004 - 1:43 pm

On Wednesday morning, my boss came into the office, her eyes were red with tears. She was mourning the outcome of the election.

The Manager tried to spin it like, "Well, it'll just give him four more years to hang himself." He forgot to mention all the rest of us he'd be hanging along with him.

Wednesday, December 29, 2004 - 2:15 pm

We're all pretty fucking scared.

That's how it seems, anyhow.

About two weeks ago, the staff in our department grew by one. Her name's Gwynn and she used to intern for us. She a couple years older than me, the kinda girl who has an "old soul" about her. She always speaks in a very thoughtful metered tone that makes me look like a seven-year-old on meth. She has ambitions and artistic goals, she's pretty well-traveled and she used to be my intern. And, well, she really shouldn't be working here just like I really shouldn't be working here. Hell, we really shouldn't be working period. But then again we have debts to repay, food to stuff down our bellies and need to fund the extracurricular activities that we use to distract ourselves from the hamster-wheelin' of the 45+ workweek.

We talked about it on Monday. Part of me felt bad, that I drew her into this circle and didn't urge her to escape. But she's a big girl and makes her own decisions. She told me that her biggest fear is that she'll get so wrapped up in just getting by with these semi-okay jobs, and then never get organized enough to really accomplish anything that she had a real passion for. She points to her parents as examples, both of whom are wildly talented, but became an optometrist and a clerk instead.

I was talking to another co-worker today about how D-- got a new job in San Francisco and how she's abandoned us. Claudia, the co-worker, asked if my plans for leaving in May were still firm. I nodded. "So, what do you do after that? Do you have other positions you're looking at?" I shook my head.

"Nope, I'm not really worried about it."

What I am worried about, however, is whether I'll make it to May unscathed. I'd leave right now, right this fucking second, if I had enough money saved up. I'm over being upset about work, I'm pretty complacent and that's what scares me. Complacency will fuck your shit up. Complacency mutates into resignation. Resignation morphs into a monster of 25 years passed, sitting in different incarnations of the same "workstation," talking about how you "used to" do things. That's fucking scary.

K	EE #	EMPLOYEE NAME		PAY - PERIOD		PAY DATE			
	55201	AMY LAM		05/23/05		06/05/05			
			06/09/05						
REGULAR	DEPT # 732	DEPT NAME:		NEW MEDIA		STATUS:		NON-EXEMPT	
Hours									
Breakdown									
DAY	Work Date	Out	In	Out	Total Hours	Straight time	Overtime	Double time	
M	5/23/2005								
T	5/24/2005								
W	5/25/2005								
TH	5/26/2005								
F	5/27/2005								
SA	5/28/2005								
SU	5/29/2005								
M	5/30/2005								
T	5/31/2005								
W	6/1/2005								
TH	6/2/2005								
F	6/3/2005								
SA	6/4/2005								
SU	6/5/2005								

"there's kinda nothing in the Budget for your happiness."

- Producer says to me about \$ for ice cream.

I have an assload of work to do right now. My Manager left for a three-week vacation and I'm stuck shouldering his responsibilities in addition to my daily rut of activities. There are no interns to help and the Boss Lady is going apeshit over some deadline for some other website that will be underappreciated. But here I am, writing out a lengthy LJ post, avoiding avoiding avoiding.

But this is, after all, what my folks wanted for me. All throughout my young life, my dad would repeatedly say to me that all he wanted was for his kids to have jobs where we get to sit on our asses with the a/c humming in the background. He always stressed how much he wanted us to work in an AIR-CONDITIONED office. I don't blame him, he's a machine operator in a box factory. His work shirts are blue. My mom has been working as a food server at Chinese fast-food joints for more than ten years, and even though she's finally graduated to managing a restaurant, I still make more than she does. I'm not even letting myself think about the guilt I should be feeling for 1) complaining about this job. 2) quitting this job. I'm not going to let their working-class, immigrant pragmatism get the best of me, an American kid raised on short-term gratification.

Dad, all the conditioned air in the world isn't worth my happiness.

Wednesday, January 5, 2005 - 2:33 pm

it seems as though my boss is under the impression that my health is declining quicker than u.s. foreign policy. she feels as though my insistence in NOT seeing a doctor is an affront to her and western medicine as well. she's felt so much so that she has been discussing this with my other co-workers.

so, i wanted to sleep in this morning. i felt like shit. what's the big fucking deal? so i lied, and told them that it was because i had a sneezey fit (which i sorta did...) and that i needed to sleep in a couple more hours. what's the harm in that?

they think i'm being stubborn, or that perhaps i am just too fucking lazy to see a doctor. what they don't understand is that i'm not really sick-sick, i'm just sick-tired of this job. god forbid that i'm not 110% every-damned-day. what they don't understand that i'm sick from this job, slowing gnawing away at any semblance of daily sanity and feeling like a normal human being with some sort of viable release.

i got called into accounting yesterday because i needed to re-fill out my time card. you see, i'm on "non-exempt" status which means i really ought to be working strictly 8-hour days, as they cannot afford to pay me overtime. i'm supposed to log "time in" and "time out." as i was filling it out, it just felt ridiculous because during the 1 1/2 years i've been here, i have honestly only taken about TEN, ONE ZERO, TEN proper one-hour lunch breaks. most times i'm eating at my desk, desperately trying get some sloppy code to work, cropping some boring image of another dead white dude, or just "holding down the fort." and 8-hour work days? oh puh-lease...

i'm not sure when this started. maybe about two months ago, when i just felt like shit and was giving everyone guff at work. i blamed it on illness, but it was more accurately acute irritability inflamed by the workplace. now everyone thinks that i have some lingering disease that's been festering in my body for months now, robbing them of important amy face-time. the worse part of this ordeal isn't even the fact that they may think that i'm some dirty petri dish of

cooties, but that no one is really that concerned unless it directly effects whether or not i can get my work done.

3:23 pm

Last week, the Producer saunters into the office, chest slightly puffed out and proclaims to me, "You'll be proud of me. Guess what I did last night?"

I secretly think, "Suffocate that poor child of yours?" But I obviously refrain from saying so.

"Well, you know, I had my car [SUV] in the shop [to replace spark plugs] last night, so I had to ride public transportation!" He gleamed. "I've never done that before."

"Uh huh?" I'm interested... sorta.

"There were men on the bus that were wearing sunglasses at night. Amy, do you know why men wear sunglasses at night?"

"Nope."

"It was an interesting experience!"

But not really interesting enough for him to do again, voluntarily.

Boss lady comes up to me, "You wanna know what I just splurged on?"

"Yes!" I love seeing what other people burn their money for. Especially a single 50-ish-year-old, childless, petless woman.

She shoves a catalogue onto my keyboard to show me:

TEAK DUCKS. TEAK FUCKING DUCKS. FUCKING \$60 TEAK DUCKS.

She bought a set of three, which brings her total to a bit less than \$200.

"I don't have any pets, so this is going to make up for it."

TEAK FUCKING DUCKS.

Manager dude just bought a used Saab. It has an overwhelming stench of leather interior. He listens to Wilco in it and thinks he's the shit.

Two nights ago I call up my youngest brother.

"Hey, you thinking of buying a new digicam?" I inquired.

"Maybe... why you asking?"

"Cause I wanna buy your old one off you."

"How much would you pay for it?"

Long pause.

"Uh, 19." I said.

"Dollars?"

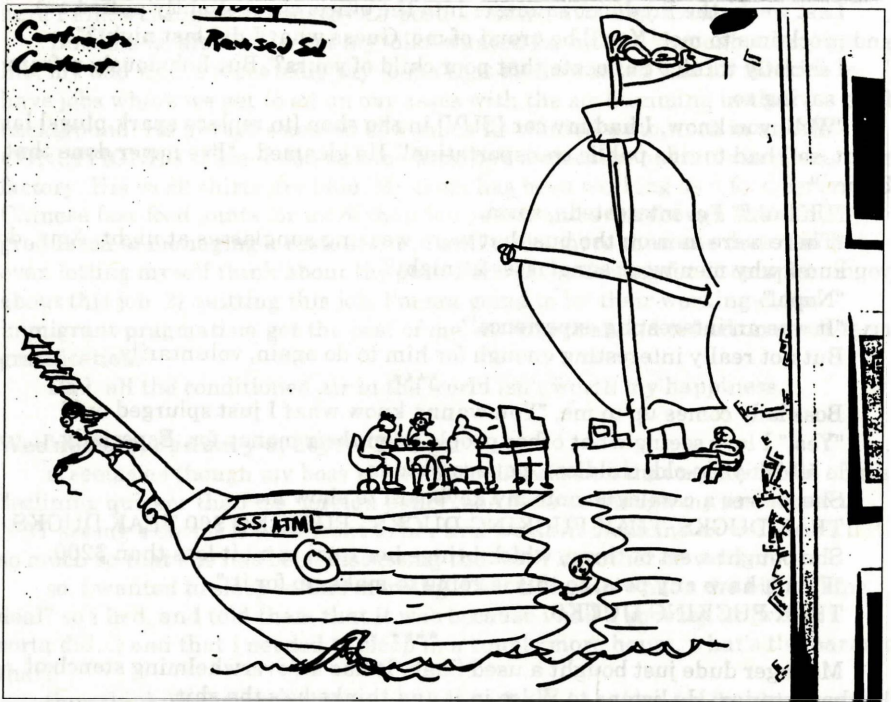
"Yeah, 19 dollars. It's almost 20, dude."

He laughs and tells me to go fuck myself.

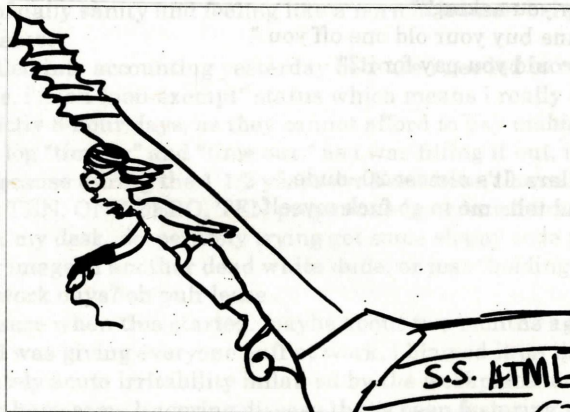
Monday, January 10, 2005 - 4:27 pm

Currently featured on our departmental white board, courtesy of the Producer:

We work on the S.S. HTML:



Yours truly, the bow maiden or something, appropriately strapped to a gigantic screw. (Notice my wrist brace and utter enjoyment of my work):



I wonder if I could get business cards of just that image.

Friday, January 14, 2005 - 1:12 pm

"Does my hair look bad?" Boss Lady asks.

"No!" I say, without thinking. Because the second you hesitate and waiver, you're deader than a dead thing. "Why would you say that?" I asked, knowing full well that it looks like some wildy retarded birds have built a nest of errant sticks and twigs upon her teeny head.

"Well, it's a new cut and color... I thought it might look dorky."

"No, it doesn't look dorky." I have a pretty good fake smile. "It looks fine."

"Oh, well... Thanks."

"Why would you say it looks dorky?" I ask again.

"I dunno..."

"No, it doesn't look dorky!"

Damn, the responsibilities of this job just keep getting outta control.

Thursday, January 20, 2005 - 4:27 pm

Like rats fleeing from a shipwreck.

Donald, the mailroom guy, is leaving next week. He's the dude I see everyday, to whom I never lie. He'll ask how I'm doing and instead of faking pleasantries, I'll say, "Same old shit, you know?"

This illicit a quizzical look, "Damn, really? That bad?"

"I bet everyone feels this way, but they just won't tell you," I reply.

"You're probably right."

He's an aspiring screenwriter and actor with the most beautiful little three-year-old boy, Morgan. His new job as an apartment manager will give him the time to spend with his kid and go on auditions. They matched his salary here and he gets a rent-free 2-bedroom apartment in Beverly Hills adjacent. I wish him the best of luck. And before he leaves next week, I'm gonna slip him copies of Lululand. I never did it before because we work together, but now that's he's a free man, I ain't worried about him exposing some scathing things I thinly disguised about my work.

But I am kinda bummed out cause there's really no one else around who I can do the "same shit" routine with.

Tuesday, January 25, 2005 - 2:58 pm

"Wow, you never ate this!" The producer said as he picked up the piece of gold-foiled wrapped chocolate on the corner of my computer monitor.

"It's called willpower," I said proudly.

"You do have willpower... I never see you eat anything bad. You're pretty healthy about it," the Producer said as he surreptitiously moved the chocolate so that it would be in my direct line of vision.

I had to stop binging on gift baskets during the holidays because sitting on my ass for 40+ hours a week does nothing for one's physicality. As such, I have started back on the "AMY NO FAT" regimen again. Eating better and working out at the illustrious Y.

"Yup, I started running again too," I told him.

"That's good. Now, if only you can get those drinking binges under control."

"Yeah, no shit."

Is it that obvious?

Monday, February 7, 2005 - 3:27 pm

Much of what I do at work involves anticipating the needs of others, mostly the needs of Boss Lady.

I have to anticipate that she is incapable of reading an e-mail and correctly identifying the confirmation of a meeting, and thusly pencils it into her own calendar on the wrong date. So when she is overbooked and can't make the meeting, she blames me for not double checking whether or not she can tell the difference between 'Tuesday 2/1' and 'Wednesday 2/2'. I mean, she's only a grown woman, how am I supposed to assume that she is capable of deciphering those tricky calendars that we've been using since baby Jesus got birthed-deds!

I have to anticipate that while walking back from HR I will see Adam Duritz, of Counting Crows b-fame, getting out of a vehicle wearing goofy green shoes, an ugly pinstripe suit with pineapple dreads sitting atop his big fat head. I have to anticipate that I will not lunge towards him and inflict physical harm upon his soft musician-y body for making more money with his insipid music than I will in my lifetime. And then coming back into our offices and having Boss Lady bitch at me because I wasn't at my desk.

I have to anticipate that if I were to get sick at the same time as Boss Lady (and the rest of the company, and a buncha people everywhere who seem to have just gotten sick within the past two weeks) that I will be blamed endlessly as the culprit of her illness. That she will treat me like a leper who isn't fit to breathe the same oxygen as she because she got it into her schizo head that because we are both sick at the exact same time, that I must be to the one who gave it to her, the most pure being on earth. I am to anticipate that I will be blamed for sullyng the health of others.

I have to anticipate that when I get sick with asthma where I can't breathe, and call into work to tell em that I will still be coming in because they need my yellow ass there, that they will digitally record my message, put it up on our internal server and play it about a dozen time during the closing of our staff meeting. I am so glad that my pain is so fucking funny.

Thanks guys, for making this such a wonderful environment to come to 45 hours a week.

Thursday, February 17, 2005 - 3:11 pm

I've been on public television once before, during a pledge drive, you could see me happily answering phones, convincing a dude to donate \$500 because I helped him find his wallet. I was wearing a red corduroy jacket and a positive disposition.

Now I'm just sorta dour and defeated. Resigned to the fact that a lot of what I do is in vain since no one is really looking at it.

But I do have something for you to look at! It's me waddling about at work while an intro was being shot. I saw it the next day when I was capturing the video to put online and I thought to myself, "Why do I look like such a ridiculous human being while I'm conducting business?" (The intro itself is so apropos, since it's talking about unwanted and discarded computers.)

<link to video clip that is not transferable in print!>

Tuesday, February 22, 2005 – 4:05 pm

The first thing the Producer says to me this morning was, "Wasn't that too many days off?"

"It's never too many days off, dude," I replied. President's Day, where we celebrate all those kooky white dudes that have lead our nation into wars, deficits and unbridled consumerism. God bless America, and god-fucking-bless that extra day off work.

Three-day-weekends make it harder to come back to work because you get to taste a weekday without being chained to your desk, pining after the sunshine outside.

Friday, February 25, 2005 – 3:22 pm

This morning I came into work, and it felt like I never left. It felt like I was just there ten minutes before I got there. It was one of the most disconcerting feelings.

Two mornings ago, I fought sleep the entire 45-minute/13-mile drive to work. When I was only a few blocks from work, stopped on the corner of Hollywood and Vermont, my heavy eyelids fell. I closed them for a second, envisioning my car being hit, my foot on the brake pedal. Then somewhere in between morbid daydreaming and my tired brain, I did fall asleep. At an intersection, while waiting for the red light to turn green. I must have only been out for a few seconds before the car behind me honked, the light had turned green, and I was as white as a sheet.

I can't even stand imagining my car slowly rolling into the middle of a busy intersection. I can't even stand thinking that I might have hurt a lot of people, and myself, just to get to work.

This sort of lifestyle, this "career" thing is more than the time you spend here. It's more than all those hideous hours wishing you were outside, riding your bike and breathing fresh air. It permeates every second of your life outside of work too. It digs deep into the pores of your skin and is a constant reminder that someone else owns you in some way.

I try to go for a run a few times a week. The act of "going for a run" takes about an hour to an hour and a half. I have to shove in some cardio activity is because I sit on my yellow ass all day and everything is getting rounder. Because of this job, I have to spend more time outside of work to be healthy, since my body and mental health is atrophying while I'm here. This is just more time away from doing other things, like making zines, music or spring rolls. This is just more time away from me.

Tuesday, March 1, 2005 – 3:02 pm

I am now more than halfway through the one-year plan. I'm sitting here in front of my dual monitor workstation, two screens that provide double the workspace. It's supposed to increase my productivity, but it feels more like a cinder block wall used to shield my view of the outside world where people don't go blind from staring at a computer. I mark the days off paycheck by paycheck, daydreaming about my early retirement.

Yup, I've taken to calling my decision to abandon the "real world" my retirement. I figured that I have the rest of my life to work, so why not enjoy

living now? Folks chip away at a mortgage/credit card debt/car payments for fifty years just to be able to afford this and I'm jamming all those fitful mornings of never wanting to return to work into a year's time.

I'm progressing slowly: some money is being saved, Goodwill donation bins are being filled with things I bought from there in the first place, and doubt takes a backseat to my wide-eyed schemes of living a dream.

* * *

Homer Simpson wants to own the Dallas Cowboys. Miss America contestants want to end world hunger. And every holiday season, a buncha folks want a white Xmas.

Everyone has a dream. Don't they?

The other day the Manager and Producer returned to the office from a Starbucks run. They were in the middle of another life-pondering discussion. The Manager, who often scoffs at pretentious-black-turtleneck-public-radio-listening-yuppies, is undeniably the exact pseudo-liberal-Saab-driving-world-music motherfucker he abhors.

He lamented, "I'm so tired of people who don't have real jobs because all they want to do is to pursue 'their dream.' Do their 'art' or whatever."

His bitterness stems from his own lack of any morsel of creativity. As my Secret Santa a year ago, he bestowed upon me a ten dollar gift card to Starbucks. I wonder if yuppie-types just buy a stack of gift cards to establishments that glossy magazines tell us we should patronize. But I digress...

I sat in silence and listened to his half-baked, half-serious, existentialist theory.

"You gotta think that everyone has a dream," he continued. "So, you're competing against everyone else in the world. What is that? Six billion people?"

"But that's the thing," I interjected. "Not everyone has a 'dream.'"

"Yeah, what's your dream?" The Producer asked the Manager.

He thought for a moment before muttering, "To have all my dreams come true... to be happy."

"Whatta cop-out!"

Before he retreated back to his office, the Manager scribbled a daunting equation on the white board. It was a ratio: 1 person's dream is equal to 1 in 6,417,618,896. It's amazing that all of our hopes and aspirations can be simplified and qualified.

So what's my dream in the making? Why in the hell do I have a one-year plan? Here's another cop-out answer: I just don't want to end up another drone without a dream.

And I'd love to stop clocking in and clocking out and just watch the sun set in all of the world's time zones.

Tuesday, March 29, 2005 - 2:17 pm

List: Names I have Called my Departmental Manager (In Order of Least to, Most Offensive, According to Him)

1. Harbinger of Lame
2. Fascist
3. Boujie
4. Metrosexual

Person's

Content author

1. Epoch Name
2. Content
3. Timeline
4. Heterography
5. Heterography / Interesting
6. About the Same
7. Education / Outreach
8. Testnet

Body

Timeline
Biography
Author Quotes

Partners



PERSON'S
DREAM

= 6,417,618,896

I don't need two...
I need a deadline.

- Doris E. Hughes

MEMBER ↓



Wednesday, April 6, 2005 - 6:21 pm

I am still very unfamiliar with how to cope with non-work stress while I am at work. I can't even count the number of times I have cried, sitting in front of my two monitors, in full-view of everyone. I can't even count the number of times I've spoken softly into my telephone receiver, choking frustration down my throat, dabbing my eyes dry. I'm just lucky that Boss Lady's line never rang while I was doing that. Imagine if I had to put someone on hold while I was going through some shit. How tacky.

My "coping" entails one of two things. One) Doing lots of stuff, pretending like nothing is wrong. Maybe even cracking a few smiles every now and then. Work, work, work. Work makes you miserable, but not as miserable as thinking about what's really bothering you. At least with work, you don't have to be emotional invested in anything and then have that investment get Enron-ed to hell. (Actually, that analogy doesn't work if you work for Enron.)

Or two) peruse blogs that take my mind off my own mindlessness. The past couple of weeks have been ridden with this behavior. Not just any blogs, but blogs about celebrity gossip. I kill lots of time following the new marriage of Britney Spears and Kevin Federline. I know all about how that girl from the OC, Misha Barton, and how she's too hot for her kajillionaire boyfriend, Brandon Davis (but I have no idea why Davis is filthy rich, and no one ever talks about it). I've seen the photos that were swiped from Paris Hilton's Sidekick, the one with her tits and making out with that foreign veejay. I've seen paparazzi photos of her cooter too. Then there's all the noise about how Cameron Diaz has a terrible acne problem, Reese Witherspoon seems to be living in a pseudo-marriage, Michael Jackson's first accuser (the one who got paid off) has grown up to be a hot young man, and more trashy news than I'd care to admit (don't you think I've embarrassed myself enough already, sheesh!)

This mind-dumbing reading of the blog equivalents to "Star" and "Us" magazines has reaffirmed my belief of why Americans are so deeply invested in celebrity culture: it makes it so that you don't have think about YOUR OWN SHIT. Seriously, I can't say this enough: God bless the U.S.A.

Thursday, April 7, 2005 - 3:36 pm

"I'm very serious about this," she said before she left the office.

Everyone passes me when they walk into or out of the office. Sometimes I'm engaged into conversation, sometimes I can't tear my eyeballs away from MySpace long enough to even acknowledge anyone came into the room. Most times it's a non event and the air around remains still.

Boss lady, who I have actually been getting along with much more lately, stopped for a second. She asked, "Do you feel disconnected... from us?"

"I feel pretty disconnected from everything," I replied after thinking for a millisecond.

When I started this job, I hated her guts because I felt like she mislead me. She seemed so awesome and "hip" to shit. But it turned that the first anniversary of her father's death was around the time I was hired and she was in the most foul mood for months. During the first three months, I contemplated quitting countless times. I shuffled into closed bathroom stalls, trying desperately to cry quietly whenever she would lashed out at me with prickly

snide remarks. Like the one time she told me to "act my age." I felt so beat and broke and disillusioned. So this is the 'real world,' huh?

But I kept coming back. Maybe it was the car payment, or the rent for my bachelor apartment, or my insatiable taste for bar booze, but something made me keep coming back for the punishment (and paycheck). Eventually, it got to the point where Boss Lady recognized that I was an asset to her and the company, that I was good at what I did and not nearly as immature and incompetent as she first thought. She began to be NICE to me. Sometimes she'd slip back into bitchiness, but we all do and I would just glare at her or sigh heavily. Even so, even with her happier disposition, I still want out.

"You feel that disconnected, huh? Is it that bad?" She asked.

"It can get to feel that way."

"Is there anyway we can disperse the work so that you can have more input in other projects and less mindless work?"

"Probably."

"Because, you're too talented for this." She said it.

I nodded emphatically. I am too talented for this. I was at once elated and saddened. My heart thumped hard in my chest, flooded with blood and the acknowledgment that all the time I have spent here was not in vain. Then I felt guilty for wanting to leave, and to in effect, take away all this spitfire ball of pseudo-"talent." But I couldn't help but feel as if she had just laid a foundation for my resignation. I couldn't help but feel that when I step into her office and tell her, that she'll understand and she will nod emphatically.

"We need to figure something out and get off this daily grind because I don't want you to get burned out on this stuff. I'm serious." she said.

But it's too late. I've been burned out, running on daydream fumes.

She continued before leaving the office, "I'm very serious about this."

Yeah, me too.

Tuesday, April 12, 2005 - 2:10 pm

I don't know how to quit.

Or at least, I didn't know how to handle the delicate manner of how to tell Boss Lady that I want to leave. I asked Durt Boy about it, he just quit his job a month ago. But he was much more open with his boss about his non-work life and they knew his time was drying up. Durt taught me some super valuable things to do/not do:

1. Don't say "I quit." Don't even use the word "quit."
2. Euphemize it as "moving on."
3. Give a date, and don't budge no matter what.
4. Prepare for the hell that is the post-resignation/new-hire period while I am still around.

So this is the script I have going for me, if I have the balls to even spit it out of my mouth.

"Um, hi Boss Lady. I don't know how else to put this, but while I have enjoyed my time here, it is time for me to move on. I just wanted to give notice that my last day is going to be May 20."

Then I throw my arms over my head for protection from the impending barrage of questions, guilt trips and the general feeling of being a deserter. I plan on doing that schpiel this Friday and I am disturbingly anxiety-ridden

about the whole thing. I hate the act of quitting a job. The act of telling someone that you want out, you want to run away, you want to get the fuck out of here. You quit.

Is what I have prepared to say enough? I don't know. This is the first super-real-adult-paid-vacation-with-benefits job that I have ever had and protocol and professionalism escapes me all the time. What are other factors that I should take into consideration? Should I make it into a Powerpoint presentation so that it is understandable to all management that I am just not cut out to suffer this white collar factory jobness any longer? Should I just open up Microsoft Word, set the font size to 60, and print out, on two pieces of paper, "I" and "QUIT." Tape them to the backs of my monitors, so that whenever anyone walks in, they'll see it immediately? Ought I do that?

Monday, April 18, 2005 - 12:21 pm

It's almost a half past noon and Boss Lady just walked out to retrieve some lunch. But before she did, she stops at my desk and says, "Today, at 1:30."

"1:30?" I'm not sure what she's referring to.

"We can talk at 1:30." She's smiling, cheerful even, before walking out. I look down to the clock to see that is just a little more than an hour away. I'm going to give my notice.

I originally planned on doing it last Friday. In between panic-stricken phone calls to Durt and realizing that Boss Lady had to leave the lot to attend a meeting, I didn't get a chance to talk to her. But she returned later in the afternoon, and I figured it was my chance. I asked her, "If you have some time, can we meet? I need to talk to you about something."

"Not today," the sun was setting and she just returned from a meeting, in no mood to seriously discuss anything. "Can we talk Monday?"

"Sure." I felt like she knew what I wanted to discuss with her because seldom do I ask to meet with her. I'm really hoping she knows so that when the words eek out of my mouth, it won't be so much of a shock to neither of us.

Here I am, munching on a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, an hour away from giving notice and I'm surprisingly calm.

1:59 pm

I just did it. And she knew. "I'm not entirely stupid," she said. She said she saw it coming, from my despondent behavior and the rut of the work.

I feel relieved as all get out. "Like I just had an hour massage," I said. "Even though I've never had an hour massage before."

"No, the massage feels better," she replied.

So now what?

Now I'm supposed to write out a job summary of what I do, from daily to weekly, cut into a pie chart of percentages of how many minutes I devoted to going blind.

Now I'm supposed to re-define by job, to make it more bearable for the next suitor.

Now I let them swim in their borrowed time.

Now I'm freakin' out about leaving. Shit shit shit.

Now it's for realz.

Monday, April 25, 2005 5:02 pm

I quit my job a week ago, right? Yeah-fuckin-right. Shit. Then what the fuck am I still doing here?

Oh yeah... I wussed out and gave a month notice and now I have to sit on my hands and half-heartedly complete projects that I was never very interested in to begin with.

I am saddies.

And now I'm forced to go out to drinks after work today because one of our interns is leaving. He's not even going to drink! Neither am I because I refuse to spend money on booze while hanging out with people I don't want to drink with.

I wish I was at home with Durt watching People's Court or whatever fine programming is available while the sun is still out.

Tuesday, May 3, 2005 - 12:59 pm

Holy shit.

Guess whose favorite little office grunt worker is published on McFuckingSweeneys??!!

List:

**Things I Cannot Say to My Unpaid Interns As It Would Make Me
Look Like an Ungrateful Bitch**

For chrissake, stop sliding your shoes. Pick up your feet when you walk.

Please step away from the baklava and other fine pastries. We'll let you know when we, the full-time employees who are slowly dying from fluorescent-light poisoning, are done. At that time, you will be free to scrape the icing off the pink box.

Shut up and stop telling me how to do my job. I can change my screen saver on my own!

I hate you and your youth for all its inspired possibilities.

Thursday, May 19, 2005 - 4:17 pm

Just one more day.

Another twenty-four freakin' hours.

This last week as been hectic, exhausting and is driving me insane. I haven't had a moment to just sit and contemplate my end of adulthood to revert back to being a wayward kid.

I haven't had time to reflect on anything. I'm typing out all of my duties, sometimes going into the minutiae of everything, and so far I have an 18-page word doc. And it's not anywhere near being complete yet.

I'll resume contact once I can breath freely again.

Epilogue

It used to be a luxury.

To sit beneath a shady tree, enjoying a cool breeze and a library book on a lazy weekday afternoon. It used to be a luxury because I used to spend all of my daylight hours in front of computer monitors—trying to see past the glare from the shining sun, so that I could get my monotonous work done at a reasonable hour, so that I could endure the rush-hour traffic ride home, so that I could veg out in front of the TV, so that I wouldn't have to think about returning the next day seated in front of computer monitors—trying to see past the glare of the shining sun.

Being freed from that hamster-wheelin' rut shouldn't be a luxury, but it is.

It has been a year since I was last immersed in the stagnant air of office buildings, the oppressive nature of the constant and infinite work to be done in web maintenance and the security of a consistent paycheck and healthcare. In that time I moved in with best friends Gus and Marah in Portland, Oregon to join friends in beer-fueled debauchery and bike-gang nonsense. I followed my parents to their reluctant homeland in Vietnam where I met distant relatives and a grandmother for the first time. I began writing my column, "Monster of Fun," contributing art junk and designed two covers for *Razorcake* fanzine. I have three jobs, two of them don't even count as work to me because I'd do it without pay—tutoring high school kids in English and clerking at Green Noise Records—and I still don't work nearly as many hours as I did before. I have reclaimed my leisure time as *all the time*, devoting it to sewing lum jum pillows for all my friends who have a place in my heart, biking aimlessly just to feel the wind against my face and cherishing every second of my anti-career. I am a lucky girl, blessed with a first-world privilege that has afforded me this luxury.

When I left KJOB, I didn't just quit a job—I also quit my parents' dream. But instead of being disappointed, mom and dad have continued to support my endeavors. This summer I'm leaving for China, where I will serve as a volunteer English teacher for a year and to see the land from whence we sprouted. I am so thankful for my parents and their strength and courage to have been able to raise children in a foreign country, and to eventually let them create their own dreams—a greater pursuit of happiness not based solely on rolling office chairs and air conditioning.

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