2010

Twenty Something Lovelorn Angst: A Personal Study

Kendel Goonis

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/fishladder

Recommended Citation
Available at: http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/fishladder/vol8/iss1/9

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks@GVSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Fishladder: A Student Journal of Art and Writing by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@GVSU. For more information, please contact scholarworks@gvsu.edu.
I'm pretty sure I am going to die alone.

Follow me on this one. I have deduced that I am definitely not "girlfriend material," or at least the general American version of the definition:

**Girlfriend Material** [gerl-fran-duh-muh-tear-EE-al] adjective: Femme who enjoys hanging out with a *garçon*, one whom she is sexually attracted to and enjoys some sort of connection, whether it be emotional, physical, metaphysical, spiritual, psychological, extra-terrestrial, or astrological. Said woman and man spend copious amounts of time together, watching movies and "hooking up" [see *booty call*]. They may or may not have plans for marriage, but for the time being, are content with P.D.A. [see *barf*] and just "being together" giving them an excuse to get physical without coming off as whores [see *skizzy skanks*] unless they're celibate [see *SERIOUS PROPS*].

I don't know how to adhere to it. I'd rather just be friends with a guy and not have to deal with all of that gushy stuff, risk becoming "involved," thus risking my place in Heaven and solidifying one somewhere a bit warmer. The other alternative is to just be married, but that's not too practical an option at the moment.

I have some amazing conversations with guys, some invigorating lunch-dates and fantastic Facebook chats with them, I can even sense chemistry between myself and certain ones. But do I pursue them and the possibility of dating? So far, the answer is no.

At this point, I have only considered two choices: friendship and marriage. But what leads to marriage? Friendship? Maybe. General interest and acquaintanceship? Lunch dates and Facebook chats and interesting conversations alone? No, no my friends. Dating.

The thing that has eluded me all these years. The big D. Date-to-the-ing. Gettin' freaky and frisky and being young and in love.

"My romantical interest and I are going to the cinema to watch a film."

"Oh when am I going to finish reading the *Harry Potter* series? Oh golly! I have no time since I've been with [enter proper noun of XY] so much!"

"Oww! My vagina hurts so much from all the crazy rampant sex [guy] and I have been having!"
Because every teacher wears glasses. And every guy isn’t a moron. All names have been altered to protect their identity/keep me from getting sued.

SERIOUSLY? We’re in the Union, the Boons are a few hours south. I’m sorry!”

“Thanks, yeah, I totally do look like a professor solely because I’m wearing glasses.”

In order to salvage, scrape and protect whatever sanity is left within me, I have organized some of my creeper experiences into a series of clinical studies:

**Case Study #1**

**Name:** Kevin Beans (Slow Kevin)

**Physical Stats:** 20-years old, 6’2”, 260 lbs.

**Details:** Met during film class, fall semester 2008.

**Key Characteristics:** His Punisher t-shirt with a hole in the armpit made an appearance at least 3x/week, skull houses a very stupid brain.

**Key Sounds:** General ape-esque grunts; a series of uhh’s and umm’s.

**Context:** Slow Kevin would lumber into class every day, never ceasing to make the most ridiculous comments after the professor would ask a generic film-related query.

“What do you guys think the director was trying to convey with the lighting approach here?”

And Slow Kevin would respond, without raising his hand, sputtering and erupting out a low-toned, third-grade level response, “I think the lighting was good for the lights.”

We would all chuckle during these types of answers, but after dozens of them, each student in the class realized in their own time that there was something wrong with Slow Kevin. And so, in a mind clouded by kindness, I decided to be nice to Slow Kevin, forgetting the formula that is so well known with nice girls:

\[ Ng + C(8As) + 5,828K / P = AF \]

**Problem:** Slow Kevin started staring at me more often in class, during class, after class, before class. His eyes were glued to me in a mental-case study kind of way; mouth agape, nostrils flared, caked drool in the corners of his mouth.

At one point he told me that he went to prom with his cousin. I had already rejected him once [see Impromptu Creeper Exit Strategies], which my classmates used as sharp teasing ammunition. But it was the class period before the final exam that was the weirdest of all.

---

[2] Because every teacher wears glasses. And every guy isn’t a moron.

[3] All names have been altered to protect their identity/keep me from getting sued.

[4] SERIOUSLY? We’re in the Union, the Boons are a few hours south.
I’m sorry!”

“Thanks, yeah, I totally do look like a professor solely because I’m wearing glasses.”2

In order to salvage, scrape and protect whatever sanity is left within me, I have organized some of my creeper experiences into a series of clinical studies:3

**Case Study #1**

**Name:** Kevin Beans (Slow Kevin)

**Physical Stats:** 20-years old, 6’2”, 260 lbs.

**Details:** Met during film class, fall semester 2008.

**Key Characteristics:** His Punisher t-shirt with a hole in the armpit made an appearance at least 3x/week, skull houses a very stupid brain.

**Key Sounds:** General ape-esque grunts; a series of uhh’s and umm’s.

**Context:** Slow Kevin would lumber into class every day, never ceasing to make the most ridiculous comments after the professor would ask a generic film-related query.

“What do you guys think the director was trying to convey with the lighting approach here?”

And Slow Kevin would respond, without raising his hand, sputtering and erupting out a low-toned, third-grade level response, “I think the lighting was good for the lights.”

We would all chuckle during these types of answers, but after dozens of them, each student in the class realized in their own time that there was something wrong with Slow Kevin. And so, in a mind clouded by kindness, I decided to be nice to Slow Kevin, forgetting the formula that is so well known with nice girls:

\[ Ng + C(8As) + 5,828K / P = AF \]

**Problem:** Slow Kevin started staring at me more often in class, during class, after class, before class. His eyes were glued to me in a mental-case study kind of way; mouth agape, nostrils flared, caked drool in the corners of his mouth.

At one point he told me that he went to prom with his cousin.4 I had already rejected him once [see Impromptu Creeper Exit Strategies], which my classmates used as sharp teasing ammunition. But it was the class period before the final exam that was the weirdest of all.

---


[2] Because every teacher wears glasses. And every guy isn’t a moron.

[3] All names have been altered to protect their identity/keep me from getting sued.

[4] SERIOUSLY? We’re in the Union, the Boons are a few hours south.
Only two seconds after the professor had ended class did I find Kevin lurching over my desk, visibly nervous.

“Hey Kendel, did you want to study together this weekend for the final?” he slowly uttered, hands behind his back.\(^5\)

“You know, Kevin, I’m just really busy, okay?”

He was determined, and instead of accepting my kind rejection, proceeded to say,

“Well, can I have a picture of you then?”

Yes, a picture of me. Of me. Not with me. Of me. Not a photo with the whole class in some final attempt to salvage all the great times we had together. No, just a photo, of me, for his own personal use, for his own intimate gain; what One Hour Photo strangeness would go on, I wasn’t sure.

**Result:** I looked up at him, pissed off, and sternly said after a few seconds of shock, the words barely escaping my gritted teeth, “No.” Looking both defeated and angry, he said, “WELL FINE THEN!” Slow Kevin was mad at me for not obliging in his wack-a-doo request. He still gives me the stank-eye when he sees me on-campus.

**Case Study #2**

**Name:** Francis Studterballs (Trevor)

**Physical Stats:** 23-years old, 5’11”, 145 lbs.

**Details:** While walking on-campus, he came up to me and struck up a conversation about my external hard drive.

**Key Characteristics:** Red and navy windbreaker, jet black hair and bushy black eyebrows, pale skin, general Edward Scissorhands-esque appearance. Peculiar for stealing light bulbs from Kleiner Commons. Intermittent, pulsating, sporadic raising and lowering of eyebrows.

**Key Sounds:** Mumbled conversations with self in a soprano’s pitch.

**Context:** My sister recently graduated from my respective public university a year ago where she initiated the tales of the man she christened “Trevor.” The mystical “human” swaddled in a red and navy windbreaker, who was always everywhere but never with another – weird and alone, mumbling sweet nothings to himself as he nibbled on his chicken nuggets at Fresh Food Company in voluntary solitary confinement.

After initiating a random conversation with me one rainy afternoon walking back from class, an anomaly of a circumstance that both frightened and elated me,\(^7\) we were seemingly on a level of acquaintanceship of which I was unaware. That is, until he asked me out.

\(^{[5]}\) This cannot be happening again.

\(^{[6]}\) Juno reference

\(^{[7]}\) Frightened: He was way creepy. Elated: I actually got to talk to this goof; my sister never got the chance.

---

**Problem:** Alone at 9:15 in the evening, walking back from class and cutting through the longest, most desolate corridor in Mackinac Hall,\(^8\) I spotted him at the end. Just he and I in this hallway and from sixty-feet away I could see his eyes practically pop out of their sockets as soon as he saw me, caught in his creeper-crosshairs.\(^9\) Keen on avoiding a truly awkward moment, I acknowledged him as soon as we got a little closer.\(^10\)

“Hey Francis, what’s up?”

“Hey Kendel! Do you like to do things?”\(^11\)

I’m not kidding; “Do you like to do things?” from the jump. The words reverberated between my ears, as if he just broke the figurative mental balls to my figurative a pool table of a brain.

“Uh, what do you mean? Things?” I said, slowly retreating.

He followed, “Well, you could come over to my place, and we could watch a movie, or something…” putting emphasis on the first syllables of “come,” “over,” “watch,” and “movie.”

My first thought? HE’S GOING TO EAT ME.

Second thought? Sweet Jesus and Mary Magdalene – Trevor is going to cut my skin off and wear it and eat my body and have sex with the leftover pelvic bone. THINK KENDEL, THINK!

I blurted, “Hey, you have Facebook right? Let me go home tonight, I’ll friend you, and we’ll go from there, okay?”

“OKAY. Sounds good,” he replied, eyes wide, millimeters from premature ejection.

“Great then, I’ll see you later!”

**Result:** I blocked his creeper self on Facebook as soon as I got back to my dorm. Every time I see him on campus, I suddenly get a text message, or need to fix my iPod, or sneeze, or get the sudden urge to run so as not to be eaten and worn as a faux-lady-body in some guy’s bathroom in the Honors College.

**Parentals**

My parents think I’m crazy with my dating neurosis. I mean, their marriage is by no means a Disney Sing-A-Long, but it’s still in existence – still fluid and flowing with the times. My mother, Ester, is best described as a pill, a Catholic zealot, whose tough exterior is only countered by her deep passion for her religious teachings.

---

\(^{[8]}\) Of course

\(^{[9]}\) Let me reiterate here – this guy is a total weirdo. My friends and I found his Facebook and under his “Interests” we found a sentence along the lines of “I love to people watch and make people pay for being hypocrites.” Totes normal, obvi.

\(^{[10]}\) Mistake, Mistake, Mistake

\(^{[11]}\) His soprano-pitch was combined with an eerily fixed-gaze and ultra-rapid fluttering of eyebrows.
Only two seconds after the professor had ended class did I find Kevin lurching over my desk, visibly nervous. “Hey Kendel, did you want to study together this weekend for the final?” he slowly uttered, hands behind his back.

“You know, Kevin, I’m just really busy, okay?”

He was determined, and instead of accepting my kind rejection, proceeded to say, “Well, can I have a picture of you then?”

Yes, a picture of me. Of me. Not with me. Of me. Not a photo with the whole class in some final attempt to salvage all the great times we had together. No, just a photo, of me, for his own personal use, for his own intimate gain; what One Hour Photo strangeness would go on, I wasn’t sure.

Result: I looked up at him, pissed off, and sternly said after a few seconds of shock, the words barely escaping my gritted teeth, “No.” Looking both defeated and angry, he said, “WELL FINE THEN!” Slow Kevin was mad at me for not obliging in his wack-a-doo request. He still gives me the stank-eye when he sees me on-campus.

Case Study #2

Name: Francis Studterballs (Trevor)

Physical Stats: 23-years old, 5’11”, 145 lbs.

Details: While walking on-campus, he came up to me and struck up a conversation about my external hard drive.

Key Characteristics: Red and navy windbreaker, jet black hair and bushy black eyebrows, pale skin, general Edward Scissorhands-esque appearance. Penchant for stealing light bulbs from Kleiner Commons. Intermittent, pulsating, sporadic raising and lowering of eyebrows.

Key Sounds: Mumbled conversations with self in a soprano’s pitch.

Context: My sister recently graduated from my respective public university a year ago where she initiated the tales of the man she christened “Trevor.” The mystical “human” swaddled in a red and navy windbreaker, who was always everywhere but never with another – weird and alone, mumbling sweet nothings to himself as he nibbled on his chicken nuggets at Fresh Food Company in voluntary solitary confinement.

After initiating a random conversation with me one rainy afternoon walking back from class, an anomaly of a circumstance that both frightened and elated me, we were seemingly on a level of acquaintanceship of which I was unaware. That is, until he asked me out.

[5] This cannot happen again.


[7] Frightened: He was way creepy. Elated: I actually got to talk to this goof; my sister never got the chance.
family. She married my father, Dan, an advocate of optimism, a go-getter, an effervescent mortal with a boundless imagination, as far as he’s concerned.

Their unwavering commitment was a result of abusive upbringings; Dad learned to both feed himself and hide from his alcoholic father around six years old. Mom, the third child of eight brothers and sisters, emigrated from Iraq at the inception of puberty and was made to feel invisible her whole life. Imagine Tula from My Big Fat Greek Wedding, subtract the love of the family and the inspiring transformative montage, add more cigarettes, and there she is. Dating? Fugheddaboudit.12

They took solace in each other’s pain, Dan and Ester, both profoundly devoted to breaking the cycles of their pasts, looking to create a new formula. The objective not, as most female publications assert, to “Keep [their] Sex Life Alive!” or to seek “The Top 10 Restaurants that Will Rekindle the Flame!” or to “Find the LBD13 that Will Make Him Double-Take!” It was to raise healthy, happy children, to stay in financial independence, and to not kill each other.

I’ve had a great life so far – sure three of my best friends dated the same guy I was in love with on two accounts14 and I’ve never been on a date with a heterosexual male, but I’ve in no way had to cope with the struggles of my parents. If it’s their story I’m taking notes from, it doesn’t quite relate; I’m left to create my own frame and storyline. But when you’re a selfish, self-indulgent, iPhone yearning, pseudo-intellectual product of the technology revolution, it’s a tough act to follow.

Youth

Fifth grade was immersed with dreams of Nico Cunningham – a dead ringer for a young Luke Wilson. Green eyes, brown hair, great smile, and generally adorable in the pre-pubescent way some boys look before they turn into for a young Luke Wilson. Green eyes, brown hair, great smile, and generally adorable in the pre-pubescent way some boys look before they turn into Shrek-heads.15

It was the skating parties where everyone got their mack on back then. However, I was still a Girl Scout, still sans braces and thus still not cool; most of my tee-shirts displayed either animals or planets. Word got out that I wanted to slow-skate with Nico, the elementary equivalent of making it to first base, holding hands and treading the wood paneled oval to Celine

[12] She never had to do the whole dating thing; she was 25 when she met my Dad and he was her first boyfriend. I once asked her what kind of blouse I should wear on a date (should it ever happen), and she told me to wear a burqa. Like in the Middle East. Where her accent left, her humor remains.
[13] Little Black Dress
[14] Still only a little bitter…
[15] The medical condition where the individual’s face, whether it be male or female, resembles Shrek, the famous green ogre from les films post-puberty. I Facebooked him a decade later.

Dion. My mom never let me slow-skate with anyone until that point,16 and I thought he was just so dreamy and might actually like me back! Oh how wrong I was. He came careening toward me on a sharp pair of Mighty Ducks-esque roller blades, whilst my feet were housed in an antique pair with four clunky bulbous wheels each.

I can see his teeth – he’s smiling! He wants to skate with me!

Wild, he looked wild; insane, pulling a short, quick stop on the floor-boards, leaning over the railings, eyes locked, and he said, with as much excitement as any sociopath could muster, “I will never skate with you.”

You know that scene in Never Been Kissed, when Drew Barrymore/Josie Grossie steps out of her home in that heinous 80’s era, bubbly Barbie-pink number, waiting to be picked up by the most popular boy in the school, sees him, makes excited eye contact and sports a cheesy grin, but is crushed when some whore is with him, then, adding insult to injury, is pelted with eggs on her front lawn by that asshole in the tuxedo? That’s how I felt – legit.

I became a recluse – a Star Wars watching, model rocket building, friend-type of girl. A reader, wise beyond her years, in desperate need of hair product and a hug.

Seriously?

But after all the analysis, complaints, anger and memories, I have to say, this whole I hate men, they’re so stupid, I’m so intelligent, here’s some jokes to counter my insecurities thing is a total front. I mean, really, after a breath or two,17 my hypocrical truth is right in front of me – there is nothing more that I would want than to snuggle with a testosterone-preferred being.18 There is something within me that is screaming to be nurtured; a romantic, burgeoning, flowery desire to skip merrily among the pastures, despite the sneers I routinely give to bf’s and gf’s19 on-campus.

It was hard to rebound when friends commandeered boys I crushed on during my entire adolescent life. Early on I didn’t see harm in divulging my juvenile desires to these heathens, to swoon over Nico with Sara without feeling that I was at risk. But just then, quietly, it would sneak. The conversation; it was the same every time.

“Hey Kendel, you know [generic XY name]?”

Like I could forget; our initials with a plus sign in-between only took up a third of my diary.

[16] Unless you count Jeremy Scarter, who only asked me to slow-skate because my best friend/ the love of his nine-year old self said no. I was sloppy-seconds already and not even into double-digits.
[17] More like “decade or two”
[18] Besides insane career success and a cuter ass.
[19] Not to be confused with BFF.
family. She married my father, Dan, an advocate of optimism, a go-getter, an effervescent mortal with a boundless imagination, as far as he’s concerned.

Their unwavering commitment was a result of abusive upbringing; Dad learned to both feel himself and hide from his alcoholic father around six-years old. Mom, the third child of eight brothers and sisters, emigrated from Iraq at the inception of puberty and was made to feel invisible her whole life. Imagine Tula from My Big Fat Greek Wedding, subtract the love of the family and the inspiring transformative montage, add more cigarettes, and there she is. Dating? Fuhgeddaboudit.12

They took solace in each other’s pain, Dan and Ester, both profoundly devoted to breaking the cycles of their pasts, looking to create a new formula. The objective not, as most female publications assert, to “Keep [their] Sex Life Alive!” or to seek “The Top 10 Restaurants that Will Rekindle the Flame!” or to “Find the LBD13 that Will Make Him Double-Take!” It was to raise healthy, happy children, to stay in financial independence, and to not kill each other.

I’ve had a great life so far – sure three of my best friends dated the same guy I was in love with on two accounts14 and I’ve never been on a date with a heterosexual male, but I’ve in no way had to cope with the struggles of my parents. If it’s their story I’m taking notes from, it doesn’t quite relate; I’m left to create my own frame and storyline. But when you’re a selfish, self-indulgent, iPhone yearning, pseudo-intellectual product of the technology revolution, it’s a tough act to follow.

Youth

Fifth grade was immersed with dreams of Nico Cunningham – a dead ringer for a young Luke Wilson. Green eyes, brown hair, great smile, and generously adorable in the pre-pubescent way some boys look before they turn into a heterosexual male, but I’ve in no way had to cope with the struggles of my parents. If it’s their story I’m taking notes from, it doesn’t quite relate; I’m left to create my own frame and storyline. But when you’re a selfish, self-indulgent, iPhone yearning, pseudo-intellectual product of the technology revolution, it’s a tough act to follow.

[12] She never had to do the whole dating thing; she was 25 when she met my Dad and he was her first boyfriend. I once asked her what kind of blouse I should wear on a date (should it ever happen), and she told me to wear a burqa. Like in the Middle East. Where her accent left, her humor remains.

[13] Little Black Dress

[14] Still only a little bitter…

[15] The medical condition where the individual’s face, whether it be male or female, resembles...
Her words would tread the surface, her face slowly morphing into a serpent, her lustful demons lighting her eyes red, willing to compromise our friendship for second base.

“You don’t like him…anymore…right?”

And in my naïveté, hoping to salvage a friendship and save face, I’d reply, “[XY]? What? Oh no! I don’t like him anymore.” I’d make some negative comment at this point, sealing my pseudo-disdain for him, “He farted on me the other day, so I totally don’t like him.”

“Okay good! Because we kissed the other day – you don’t mind, right?”

There I was taking solace in the friendship, conceding my happiness for their newly-estrogen fueled selves, while they were taking liberties with my heart.

**Reality**

So here I am again, with my ice cream and my pasta, sitting in my sweatpants watching a Norman Rockwell painting develop outside of my apartment, nestled, protected from the rude winter gales. But I can’t stay here forever, with my Teddy and my novels and my copy of *Forgetting Sarah Marshall*, away from the world, keeping consistent my status as an observer of romantic experiences instead of creating my own.

Like I said, it can’t be rocket science, as much as I wish it was. A system of analytical processes would be a welcome friend right now in place of the proper flirting tactics from my issues of *Glamour*. In all honesty, I’m terrified of this whole thing; dating is the one phenomenon that I have yet to conquer, besides childbirth or death. I don’t know how many more times I can be told “I will never skate with you,” without wanting to cry in a dark, Emo corner for the rest of my life.

The exhaustion from my neurosis has ruined the all the fun in being neurotic. Maybe this was my journey – to beat the living shit out of my brain until I became too weary to house the angst. And I’m still young; I have time to figure this stuff out. But I could be ready, you know? The best things in life come around when you least expect it, right? It’s more likely I’d see John Mayer riding on a dinosaur with Sarah Palin than for me to settle down anytime soon – I am a free woman! Why don’t you just hand me a Busch Light and get me to a fraternity, I have some P.D.A. to catch up on.