

Stark Raving Sane: On Being By Yourself

By Catherine SWEET

There are two things I remember from Grade Nine Health class. The first is: it's bad for your circulation to cross your legs. The second was: being alone and being lonely are not the same thing.

It could be the winter doldrums, but I've been thinking a lot lately about being alone. Most of the time, I'm in love with the idea of being alone. There is something eternally romantic about it. The lone wolf. One against the world. I am a rock. I am an island.

I love travelling solo and then touring by myself. There's something so powerful about it. I like to imagine what other people are thinking when they see me purposefully walking around a city. Is that a business woman between meetings? A trendy it-girl on the hunt for the perfect slingback? A university student going in debt to appease her love affair with England?

Yeah. The last one.

Most of the time (especially in the summer), I am in love with my home province and everything about it. Sometimes, however, it's impossible to adequately express how exhausting I find Prince Edward Island. It's not an aesthetic issue- it's a social issue.

There are the times when I dread having to go into public because I know I'm going to see someone I recognize and I'll have to make small talk about crap I don't care about. Small talk sucks my will to live. If you ever have the misfortune of

talking to me, never make small talk. I'll be forced to wear my mask of feigned interest to be polite.

"Yeah, I'm still at UPEI. No, I'm graduating this year. September? My Master's, hopefully. Ontario. Yup, busy. Yeah, it is cold. Later!" Smile, smile, smile and then you can escape.

I want to escape with that

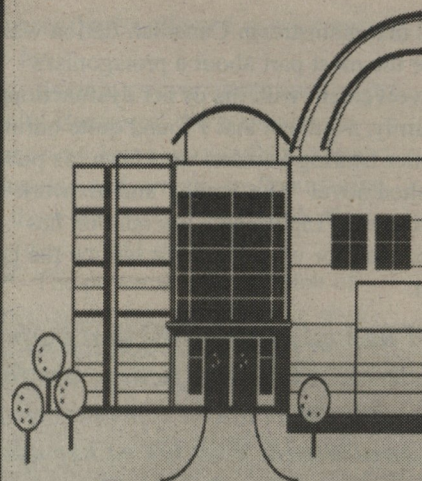
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anonymity again. I want to go eat my lunch in a restaurant by myself. I want to sit on a park bench and read a book. I want to take all the time I want when I'm shopping or visiting museums. I don't want to think about how someone else feels.

But then, you want a second opinion on a skirt. Then you come across a cool object in that museum and want to talk about it. Or you're in that restaurant, see scallions on the menu, forget what they are (as I always do), and *know* your best friend knows what scallions are.

Maybe being that lone wolf isn't always the best thing. I know that being alone and being lonely are not always the same things. But sometimes they are.

I think for me, being solo is like a brief therapy I have to indulge myself in. It can't go on for too long or then I slowly leave the state of being alone and edge toward "lonely." Me no likey.



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Identify the songs these lyrics come from:

- 1) Separate your rights from wrong
So come on sing a different song
The kettle's on so don't be long, mon
chère
- 2) Right away Marianne flew in from
Atlanta
On the red-eye midnight flight.

Movie Quotes (identify the film):

- 1) "Shame on me for kissing you with my eyes closed so tight."
- 2) "You're lit from within, Tracy, you've got fires banked down in you, hearth-fires and holocausts!"

Trivia:

- 1) In what movie does the main character lip-sync, "Danke Schoen" and "Twist and Shout" on a parade float?
- 2) What historic event took place on December 8, 1980.

Answers from last issue:

- 1) "Scream" by Michael and Janet Jackson
- 2) "It's Tricky" by Run DMC

Movie Quotes:

- 1) American Beauty
- 2) City Slickers

Trivia:

- 1) It's Mr. Fitzwilliam Darcy
- 2) "Springtime for Hitler" is from "The Producers"