

The New Epigram

Almost can be like a very nearly

I forgot to ask B what she thought an epigram was. Eventually, when the inquiry did come up, we looked it up in her book of collectable quotes, sayings and, in general, things to know. I was not sure how to tell her, I wanted her interpretation instead.

I wanted to pretend that the new epigram was a traveling anecdotal telegram with multiple yet related messages.

When I was sleeping next to B for the first time, I had a strange and strong dream that my brother made me cry. But we had been talking about her brother, not mine. I woke up in the morning, wanting to cuddle. The night before, when we were on her bed looking up epigrams, I was trying very hard to flirt with my body. In the end I had to just ask her if I could kiss her goodnight. Ah yes, we lay in her bed with red-orange tinted sheets, my brown skin next to her pale white and the lights already off. I was borrowing a pair of her pajamas. At the last minute I had decided to conveniently miss the Bart. The heater was on and the sheets felt warm, as did her skin.

I am unsure what the light was like when we woke up. Instead, I reminisce. One time between my alarm clock and the vertical beige light and my arm while still in that state of haze, I remembered something:

Swim, edit, write about film. Buy new pen. The phone rings next door. They sleep. Thursday March 16? I've lost track of days and my watch has fallen behind the leap year.

My mom calls to chat and tell me she is excited to come visit this weekend. I ask her what she thinks an epigram is. "An epigram is like being ethical because really I have no idea what one is." I am still a little nervous about her visit and the plan is to hide a select number of items in my large dark closet. Items to place out of sight: the books about cunnilingus, condoms, the photograph from the Dyke March when I was holding that sign 'Put Your Attitudes Back in the Closet'. I am going to acupuncture this week so I will no longer need to hide my smoking habit. H thinks my mom knows I am a lesbo so I do not have to

worry because she will not bring it up. She suggests I take my mom to the mall because that is a with-mom activity. I was thinking about it, - and I decided that if my mom found my special blue bag with my vibrator, that could be an interesting conversation point.

There is a sore developing in my mouth. My mom diagnosis that there is too much heat in my body. She gives me a recipe for roasting rice with mung dhal because this will help cool my body.

Cilantro and tomato also have cooling properties. Green apples are cooler than red apples. Mangos give you heat.

I have not been eating too many mangoes. I have not quit smoking yet. I thought about bringing mangos to the picnic B and I had two weeks ago.

Mangos are sexy, in particular with strawberries.

I do not always think of my mother.

M proclaims with confidence that an epigram is like a jumble, especially the kind her mom used to make her for long plane rides. Her mom would also write the answers on small pieces of paper and staple them together. Inevitably, M would open the answers before she came up with solutions and her mom would be sincerely disappointed that she did not try hard enough.

H makes tea for M and I in her new kitchen where everything is cooperative living. Even when it is nighttime, it feels like the 5 o'clock sun is shining through the window. The note alongside the doorbell tells you to hold the buzzer for several seconds. Especially useful if you do not have a cell phone. Useful in general because H does not always answer her phone anyway, as it should be. H is distracted and confesses that she thought that epigrams are what we define as epitaphs and in fact still thinks this. She seems distressed in a deflated way, but I am sure it is not about epigrams or epitaphs per say.

Today's revelation is tomorrow's self-confidence.

It is all right to confuse epigrams with epitaphs. Many people confuse epigrams and epitaphs (but not with ethical).

I have been asking people to leave me witty sayings on my answering machine and recording the messages. M says, "*Good girls don't but Indian Girls do*". My brother says, "*Hard work always pays off in time, laziness in the now.*" My mom says she is going where no woman has gone before.

I used to only record the messages with witticism, but now I record them all. Sometimes I am too lazy to save all the messages since I have to record them fast enough to leave room for people to leave new messages. There is a movie where you hear conversations by being connected to the character who eavesdrops on the people nearby.

On my way through the kitchen from my bedroom to the back porch I decided to ask my housemate E what he thinks about epigrams. E tells me, "I want to say it is a shape but I know that is not it." We barely talk anymore. In the past, we would talk about movies or his love life. Sometimes I talked about my life. He keeps going down to OC because his father is dying. He tells us this after we all notice he is going away ever weekend. According to E, his father is an asshole and drove all his friends away. I wonder if this weekend will be the last of this type because E is on the phone with the hospital telling them that they need to call him when his father gets admitted.

The night I spent with B I thought no one was sleeping in my house in San Francisco because all the housemates were supposedly out of town. I did think, briefly, of the house all alone. If I had come home, I would have been in the big house all alone. When I came home on Sunday, I saw that E had left his shoes in the living room. Along with a stack of videos and DVDs, Sherman Naturals, a cd wallet, his wallet, a bottle of whisky and 2 glasses, one empty, one half full. I don't ask but instead when I see him later, I comment that he looks nice in baby blue, which he rarely wears. It is true.

Epigram, the kind that is able to leap tall buildings: A lonely gram. Smaller measurement, but the black sheep of grams. Speaks old Latin, has a sharp, black, but quiet sense of humor. Can be found in dark socks.

I am sure no one is obsessed with what people think epigrams are like I am.

There are so many once upon a time but no longers, it could be an ocean.

A month or so before, I had just gotten home, midnight or so. The past three days I was helping T design a postcard. The night before we started the postcard design work I had unexpectedly 'taken her home'. Well, it was not surprising really. Only the week before we were hanging out at the bar with margaritas and I told her when I took 3 more sips she would see a side of me that she has not seen before. That, too, was not shocking except a week later with margaritas again, when she kept saying I was cute, I asked her if I had really told her I once had a crush on her and if she remembered.

It was nice to take her home.

Apparently when she said I was cute, that was not all she meant. It was still nice the next morning. I liked it when she broke a sweat more than I ever imagined I would. A few days later I had to finally make sure we were on the same page, maybe the same book if not the same library. Admittedly, I also asked her what page she thought we were on. She was my first and the first person on my new quest toward the epigram. Walking down the street, she was going to go home left, I to the east. *Ummm, it's that thing in books, that thing you write in the beginning of books that is not the dedication. No, that is not it.*