

Whit describes himself as looking like a portrait of one of the saints. Gaunt, lanky, pale, stringy hair. I see young Patti Smith. The intensity sits in the eyes, and the ease with which he moves the large sensual lips to toss out ideas and observations. He'd be easy to write off as that stoner guy, who's position is everything is everything. But he makes strong impact and lasting connections. His investment in astrology, mysticism, alchemy could also be seen as foreign and unrelatable, but this too he shares with those he's intrigued by to offer a map that may be useful. Got a beautiful voice and humorous, tender lyrics. He's 6'5" but he drives around a tiny Honda Civic with a sunroof. House filled with plants. He drinks loose leaf teas.

When I slept over he offered his spare tooth brush. What is a spare tooth brush? "The communal, you've found yourself in my house destined for my bed brush?" It had some patches of flaccid bristles and it's white strip had faded. I must say I'd feel better believing it were his, rather than just a catch-all for the strays. Stray seems applicable.

The first night we spent time we hugged a long while parting, then I came on strong over text and on the second date he kissed me. By the third, he had me over to his house and invited me to stay upstairs, overnight in his bed if I wanted, cause he was headed down to the 1st floor to sleep with his neighbor/partner. Fourth date he took me to an orchid farm right outside town. I was really happy cause I'd learned Alexander McQueen was born the day after me, and shared my moon and rising. I didn't brood on my unrequited feelings until we got to the gallery opening in Pilsen, and he worked the room of people I didn't know. He drove me all the way East back to school, a bit reluctantly it seemed. We kept in touch for a week or two over text, amusing one another with original pictures and poetry.

James Whit Forrester — You invited me to join you at a queer dance party with mutual friends and said you had a birthday gift for me, but ultimately you never showed. You called the next day, booked a ticket to NYC while I'll be there, we chatted each other up for an hour, laughing and unraveling huge trivial mysteries. I realized I only talk to you my grandmother and my best New Orleans friend for over 30 minutes on the phone.

You bought my ticket to a movie, shared your beer with me, held my hand, caressed my leg, listened all night, and never broke eye contact, then told me you wanted me to go back to

your place with you. You bought us grape leaves, plantain chips and a chia seed drink at a bourgeois bohemian 24/7 liquor and organic food store. We shared the late night snack. I contributed a quarter of a chicken wrap that still had 5 bites leftover from lunch. Your kisses were powerful, tongue deep in and around my mouth. I held your thin body near mine. We fell to sleep and cuddled, embraced in many configurations till early morning. My alarm awoke us. You asked me to skip class and stay with you. I sucked your dick. It looked just like mine, maybe a little bit thicker, tanner where mine is pinker. I've seen so many and never beheld one so close in approximation to mine. I traced a line from your groin to belly button and told you I first texted that I loved you after watching you tie up your shirt into a halter top, exposing that area. You'd put on lipstick to enjoy and entertain a house party. I left your bed and thought of you all day. In class, when asked to describe a smell I'd encountered en route to school, I said the smell of alcohol being sweat out the morning after by the person laying beside you which smells like sweet fruit, sentimental, and alluring if you're in love, and toxic if you're dissatisfied. That same day in one text you told me you didn't want to sleep together but invited me to a karaoke bar where you'd be. I didn't respond till 5:30am cause I was with someone else. You sounded forlorn and apologetic in the voicemail you left a couple hours after the text came. You thought I ignored cause I was hurt. I was hurt at 6am when I thought about it on my way home. I had to spill my feelings and spell it all out. I don't wanna keep becoming excited about a possibility with you when it's clear your feelings and desires waver; you're unconvinced you're attracted to me, and you're in control of our development, in control of my feelings as you accept or reject me. It's hard for me to look you in the eyes now—not because I don't understand what I'm seeing, or for the intensity, which is how I once felt, but because I know you can see my longing and the intense pain that registers for me now when I perceive your face.

Of course I've thought of never-ending loneliness and how I could escape the feeling of rejection and despair through death. How maybe you'd like me more if you could never see me again. I always think about that. But this time I immediately jumped in to a 1st date and then found someone else to fuck to feel human and not so alone. Lying next to a guy, watching funny, pretty things on their TV feels wrong and bad if you know you don't really want to love them the way you really want to love another. So much of coupling is finding ways to kill time, and that feels extremely wasteful when the person isn't right. Rejection is the quickest way to breed obsession.

When everything is dead

in the fields, in the swamps, in the forests

When everything has passed and gone and my friends have all moved on

Where will I go

where will I be

where will you meet me

Let all that what can may come I will need no one to keep me