

candy crush

by Glynnis Eldridge

1. we got off at the same stop. you approached me as i walked towards the stairs. i saw you looking at me, you said. i wasn't. i was looking at your magazine's cover. i don't remember what i said. i wanted to explore how to exist as myself however i wanted. i wanted to get bobbed along the waves and see which shore i'd end up on. i followed you up the wrong set of stairs, the ones at the other end of the station, in a direction i didn't know. i followed you down the street and we passed the subway entrance i normally took. we walked away from my block and i followed you through a metal gate and up a couple flights to your apartment. i remember there were beer cans all over the floor. i remember one or two cans cut in half, filled with white and yellow candle wax. we sat at your kitchen table. i was nervous. you tried to ask me to drink something. we talked about something benign. i said i had to leave and you followed me home. i don't know what we talked about. i did not invite you upstairs. you followed me into the lobby of my building and you kissed me. i said goodbye and locked the door and watched you leave. i wanted to make sure you were gone. i made sure to never see you again.

2. we are friends now. i think this was unintentional, at least on my part. my friends became your friends and we were in the same circle after however many weeks had gone by since. i think you are fine now. you write on the internet like an activist who sees things too many gloss over, important details often missed. but i did not meet you that way. i met you as a college freshman. i was younger, you were older, but in the same year. somehow you were guiding me through the dormitory hallways, through bathrooms to more hallways, to your room where you had a styrofoam container of waffle fries and fried chicken. you sat in front of it on a plastic chair and put me on your lap. you put your hat on my head. you said, eat up girlie, you're too skinny. you fed me waffle fries. i remember lying

on your bed, looking up at the ceiling, you kissing my face and my neck and your roommate coming in and saying oh and maybe leaving but i left can't remember. i remember you kissing me in the hallway outside my room, telling you to go away, finding every excuse possible ("my roommate is sleeping," "i have to wake up early for class tomorrow," "I have so much work to do," "my mom is calling me," etc.)

i can do nothing and watch myself level up or fail. a frame fills with something wet if i do something right. i move onto the next level if i switch the placements of the right objects.

i remember working in a friend's room. i remember the dim light and her high bed and leaving to use the bathroom. i remember seeing you in the hallway, someone getting a tattoo, loud music, and you calling me a bitch.

if i do nothing a lot can happen. the water rises and i continue to watch. i can look for the patterns in the waves but they won't answer anything. something spills out of me like a poison. yesterday you told me i look scary. not myself. i said i can't feel anything anymore. a change in medication, maybe? i don't like the smells i used to, i don't like the way you move the muscles in your face. i feel stunned all the time that anything ever happens, and especially that change occurs and can occur and is set to occur in any length of time. i'm amazed that anything ever happens. i'm amazed at the consequences of nothing. when we were together i said nothing and let you make all the consequences.

i want to apologize to my mom for all of the shit you put her through. i think i can because of genetics. i want to apologize to mom for the shit her family put her through too. i think i can because of genetics too. i want to apologize to mom for my health problems, for being an expensive baby, for being a decision she kept.

i want to joke about being doomed. say "we're doomed" in the most high pitched, pinched, nasal, pessimistic voice, laugh, feel fine, now that it's been said. (((("we're doomed!"))))

