

[back...](#)

\* Max was suspended for this issue \*

[next issue...](#)*The Crux**Thirteen*

December 2002

I'm tired of this. Whenever we do anything right, someone always turns it against us and tells us it's wrong. Maybe adults are just scared and bitter, spending all their time looking down at us from their little birdcages. Because every time some kid says something she needed to say, or does something she needed to do, or makes out with someone she needed to make out with, the whole world conspires to make her feel like crap.

Parents always get wary at the mention of fun. They don't want us to stay out too late because—well, no one really knows why, do they? Because they want us to get more sleep? But most of us don't go to sleep until after midnight. They usually say, d'you have to come home because it's a school night. And they say it like robots, because they don't really know why they're saying it and they don't know what it means. Everyone's worried that their kids are going to have sex. I find that the idea that my parents would have any say in what I do with my penis to be very disgruntling. And how come the sex education class in the high school focuses completely on the unpleasant aspects of sex? Why do we know more about Gonorrhea than we do about communication and trust?

I had two sex talks when I was twelve, one from each parent.

My mom said, d'Max, when you make out with a girl, it's going to be a lot more important to her than it will be to you. Girls have really strong emotions when it comes to this, and boys don't. You have to try to understand that, so that you don't end up hurting anyone. I clenched my fists and hit my desk after she left, but it didn't help, I still felt bad that I was a boy. My dad gave me a much more useful slice of sex education: d'Make sure she orgasms first. What a guy.

Parents are always pretending to like their kids more than they do, because it makes them feel more adequate. People make their kids eat dinner with them when they don't want to spend time with their kids at all. How awkward is that? d'You have to eat dinner with me even though we can't stand each other, because it reminds me of a family I once saw on TV. And then when we finally sit down at the table with them, they start saying crap to us that we'd never say to another human being. d'How was school? I can't believe my ears every time an adult asks me that. When police officers are wrapping rape victims in blankets, do they ask, d'how was it? They even tell us what tone of voice we should use when we're talking to them. I wish we knew enough to respond to that with, d'What in God's name is going on here?! How can one person tell another not only what to say, but how to say it?

How often do you find yourself having conversations with teachers where their goal is to make you feel guilty, and your goal is to appease them? Since when has belittling and manipulating students become part of the educator's role? Oh, and now the teachers are saying, d'well I don't do that! Do you think that teachers actually call their students screw-ups? No, the teachers here are such good politicians that even they themselves don't know when they're being destructive. You've all done it at one time or another, but some of you make a point of doing it every day. It's the disappointed looks, the scolding rhetorical questions that students dare not answer, the offense you take at a kid who will look right into your cold little eyes.

I always used to wonder how teachers slept at night, but I understand now. You have so little empathy for students that you can barely even pretend to care how they feel. So how could something you actively ignore keep you from sleeping?

Until now, I have been one of the willing teenage sponges that are used every day to soak up excess adult shame. But I've been thinking, lately. I've been thinking that it's either us or them.

I'm going to stop sinking to the floor of the shower, biting the backs of my hands until they're bright red, wishing time would stop. I'll bite your knuckles, I'll make you feel trapped, I'll make you cry.

I haven't done anything wrong, but I still feel like shit a lot of the time. Why is that? Why do kids have to take it all, when we're not the ones who always screw up? Why are we trained to feel guilty? Why haven't I been protecting myself?

This school is lame and the classes are a joke. I haven't learned a damn thing. I guess you've been trying to teach me to smile and do things I don't care about. My mother tried to teach me that, too, but I still can't pretend to like her or anyone else. You know that when my girlfriend tells me she can't see me because she's sick, my feelings get hurt? And I even start to get mad at her? It takes me five minutes to realize that my job is to make her feel better, not to feel sorry for myself.

Maybe I'd be a better friend if I wasn't so worried about how it makes me look when she can't see me because she's not well enough. And maybe I wouldn't be so worried about looking important if my mother hadn't tried to make me feel like an asshole all the time, and then sacrificed our relationship to save her ego.

And I don't look important, because I hurt people and drain on people for no reason, because I don't know how to deal with them loving me.

Why are most conversations with parents about how the child should feel worse, because the parent feels bad? Or how our parents are stressed out about us going to college, so we should be, too?

But that's over, now. I'm going to pull your knife out of me, and I'll jam it between your ribs, and I'll twist it. Fuck you, Mom.

## Thirteen Important Things to Think About

1. On a lighter note, here are some more jokes I made up about Matt Roth!
2. Dear Matt, I want to be Ms. Hannigan's mouth and I want you to be a pacifier, when she gets really stressed out.
3. I want to be rap music and I want you to be white people.
4. I want to be any given member of the cross country team, and I want you to be any other given member of the cross country team.
5. I want to be a waterslide and I want you to be a little girl.
6. I want to be a flaming hoop and I want you to be a spandex-clad circus-koala.
7. I want to be an MRI and I want you to be someone who might have brain cancer.
8. I want to be a sick baby and I want you to be a rectal thermometer.
9. I want to be Wal-Mart and I want you to be sad people.
10. I want to be Mr. Wehrli and I want you to be the Supreme Judicial Court, eventually.
11. I want to be the vending machine by the band room, and I want you to be the dollar you're going to slide into it after you read this, so that you can buy me a Snickers to show me your less well-articulated affection.
12. I want to be my mailbox and I want you to be the homemade bomb that your mother's definitely going to put in it.
13. I want to be Hannah Myers and I want you to be practically every guy in the school.