

# FEATURES

"I have this weird thing that if I sleep with someone they're going to take my creativity from me through my vagina." - Lady Gaga

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## DEFINE: BULLSEYE

By Ravind Kumar

Twenty-four smooth, black, acid-scented grains of smokeless powder lie compacted in a brass shell. The shell is 1.70 inches long with a 55-grain hollow-point cork above and an explosive primer charge below.

The charge handle pulls back the bolt, sliding into a well-oiled buffer tube as it cocks the hammer back before slamming forward, carrying the long-nosed bullet to the open chamber. The gun quivers steadily, waiting for the trigger signal to explode and slam in and out again — the definition of locked and loaded.

The wind is slow on my face as I hold my hand-built AR-15, .223 caliber Stag Arms upper on a Kaiser defense lower, with a VLTOR retractable stock.

My left thumb moves against a button on the vertical grip, and a spring loaded bipod emerges while my right thumb flips off the safety. In the chamber is a hand-loaded round, an experiment in explosive projectiles. Breath slow and steady, hand firm against the guard, finger easing onto the trigger, lining up rear and forward sight onto the bulls-eye 25 yards away.

This isn't far for a rifle that can hit 200 yards in the arms of

an experienced marksman. But a lousy rear sight and an experimental hand-loaded bullet makes accuracy a question of luck and skill. At 25 yards, wind and gravity don't send the bullet toward its inexorable descent to earth any earlier than the target itself — point and shoot, and there the bullet shall lie.

A flinch or jump sends the rifle barrel off-center, as anything less than instinct will provoke a reaction from the body: the unconscious need to jump out of the way of the shot, the explosion, the sound, the clap, the bang.

This is nothing compared to the bolt actions on the bench next to me — two old World War II bolt actions, more than 50 years old each, with enough recoil to send an unprepared user straight to the ground, shoulder and ego bruised. With either of those ancient monsters the natural fear does not come from the explosion, but the recoil, like a sandbag being thrown at my chest with each shot.

I imagine a Russian soldier with my 1945 M44 Nagant, crouching in the freezing snow, knowing full well that he could pick off a German soldier from 500 yards away, or the German soldier with my 1938 Kar-98, waiting for an enemy to poke out

of cover, with no rubberized stock or spring-loaded buffer tube to absorb the recoil, no high-power scopes or holographic sights to paint the target in the freezing moonlight. Do I dare to aspire to their standards?

For the moment, my targets are not breathing — just paper on cardboard backing, set into the packed sand with stakes.

Adrenaline sends the crosshairs awry, but the bipod steadies my aim. The 16-inch barrel looms forward, matte black in the high-noon sun, steaming with anticipation.

Experience tells me to squeeze the rifle tighter to the shoulder, bring cheek to cool rubber stock, and take my left hand to the bipod to keep it from sliding, all while breathing in and out slowly to steady the heart beat.

The gunshots around me from the other shooters become simple background noise, like static over the radio during a quiet car ride home. Little by little, the crosshair stops weaving.

There is a moment of peace before the trigger pull, where the mind and body become completely and utterly still. There are no thoughts of homework assignments, unpaid bills or oil changes. GPA and graduation become dull in comparison to

the one-inch circle group I have as my goal.

College is a faraway place with no real relevance at all, another distraction among other equally meaningless distractions, each with its own fabricated importance, competing among one another for my attention. The smell of gunpowder and hot metal scald the senses, pointing all forward at a small orange circle 25 yards away.

One deep breath in and out. A second deep breath in and I squeeze the trigger as I exhale, allowing the crosshairs to settle perfectly on my target for one split second.

The trigger breaks cleanly, releasing the hammer from its position to strike the firing pin forward, piercing the waiting primer, sending an explosive spark into the dormant powder, alighting within its brass cage an inferno of flame, superheated gas and pressure, sending forth an eruption of fire and metal as the bullet flies forth to its target. The action cycles, and another bullet is brought forth into the chamber, waiting for the next pull.

My shot is two inches low and one inch to the left. I adjust my sights, crouch down lower, and start over again. One shot down. 1,000 rounds to go.

# (100) Days of Summer Adventures

By Amanda Robbins  
Staff Writer

I am a Southern Californian, born and raised, but before college I hardly ever had the chance to do much exploring. As I've made more friends from all over the place and spent less and less of my winter and summer breaks at home, my homeland has expanded into a pretty awesome world.

This summer, some friends and I took advantage of the world around us and spent our weekends exploring as much as possible, as cheaply as possible. Here are some of the little adventures and places that I've grown to love:

1. The Getty Center, Los Angeles. Sure, it isn't an obscure hole-in-the-wall place, but it's always worth the visit. Grab some friends, pile into the car and hit the 405 North. The Getty is open from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Saturdays. Aside from the veteran collection, the exhibits range from documentary and food photography, Old Testament images, sculpture galleries and the beautiful art of French artist Gerome.

The Getty also offers a gorgeous view of Los Angeles, a chill atmosphere and tranquil gardens. Bring your own lunch and snacks, and you're looking at a very cheap day out. The Getty Center has free admission, so all you'd have to do is split parking (\$15 per car) between you and your carpool buddies. Honorable Mention: Any of

the museums in the LA area are worth a trip! Los Angeles County Museum of Art, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Norton Simon, Hammer ... or even the museums at Exposition Park.

2. Tio's Tacos, Riverside. You haven't truly experienced a restaurant until you've been to Tio's. I first encountered Tio's during a winter break mini-road trip to visit friends, and knew it was worth making a trip to the Inland Empire for this place. Sure, the food is pretty great and the horchata is a gift from God, but what really makes Tio's is the décor. Located on Mission Inn Ave., the place looks nondescript from the street, but the charm hits you the moment you pull in to park.

The entire grounds are decked out in artwork made from recycled materials—sculptures made out of chicken wire and discarded children's toys, mosaics made out of broken plastic goods, strange fountains and walkways made out of glass bottles. It's impossible to see all of Tio's in one trip, but it's definitely worth a try. And if you're already going to be at Tio's, you might as well wander around the Mission Inn and visit UCR's UTC equivalent University Village.

3. San Diego. The San Diego Zoo is one of the best zoos in the country, and it has pandas. The zoo is located in Balboa Park, which is worth a day trip all on its own. With fifteen cultural, historic, science and art museums, gardens, performance art venues, gorgeous



Courtesy of Jennifer Polito

Tio's Tacos' recycled material sculptures jam for Mexican food connoisseurs in Riverside, California.

architecture and plenty of people-watching to do, Balboa Park is a great place to hang out.

Hillcrest is also an excellent place to visit, full of good food and great vintage thrift stores to prowl. Sea World, the Museum of Contemporary Art (which currently has a really cool exhibit called "Viva la Revolucion!" spanning throughout downtown) and La Jolla's beaches are great ways to spend a day in San Diego as well.

4. Keep it Local. Grab a blanket, a book, your camera, some snacks and some bread to feed the ducks and head on over to Mason Park! It's a short walk (or an even shorter drive) from the UCI campus,

right behind the off-campus Ivy League-named apartments. Mason is perfect for picnics, barbecues, potlucks or just lazing around in the shade people and animal watching. Keep an eye out for turtles, geese, ducks, egrets and the puppies and children who chase them.

If feeding ducks doesn't sound like a good time, hit up any of the beaches in the area. Crystal Cove, Corona Del Mar, Laguna, Newport, Huntington and Dana Point are all worth getting to know—they all offer something different whether it be beach-side shopping, a thriving surf culture or proximity to mother nature. And don't ignore Costa Mesa or Santa Ana's art and music scenes either!

5. Visit Friends! Now that you've spent a year or so getting to know them, go visit them! Meet their family, let them show you around their hometown or just spend the day watching movies and playing with their dogs. Even invite your friends to come visit you and your home for the day.

Think of all the things you love in your hometown and tell people about all year long when you're at your most homesick. If it hadn't been for visiting friends, I'd never have discovered some of the places listed above.

Take what's left of summer and explore. With the right mindset, any trip is an adventure.

## Make Your Own Damn Sandwich!

By Charles Lam

Homemade lunches have fallen by the wayside with the surge of fast food restaurants. If you're on campus during the summer, you're probably tempted to drop into the food court for a quick lunch.

But if you want to eat cheap, tasty and healthy food, the easiest way is to prepare the food yourself. It's not complicated. If you're getting a sandwich at Wendy's, you might as well learn how to make your own and save some money.

### The Bread:

Fast food buns are pretty basic fare: white bread, with maybe some sesame seeds on the top. They are nothing fancy but can be pretty bad for you. Butter will push up the calorie count without providing any extra nutrition. You'll be getting 200 calories from nothing but air and butter.

Sandwich bread gives you plenty of options. The healthiest is whole wheat bread. You'll get the same amount of calories but more dietary fiber, which makes you feel full faster and helps you absorb nutrients more efficiently. Give the bread a light toast and you've got a sturdy base that won't break apart while you are eating.

### The Fat:

All good sandwiches have some form of fat. A layer of fat between the bread and the filling will keep everything in place. It prevents the bread from getting soggy. What you can control is the kind of fats you take in.

The fat of choice at fast food places is mayonnaise. While it's



NICK VU | Staff Photographer

One Sandwich to rule them all, One Sandwich to find them. The very best sandwiches require little effort.

not actually too bad for you, most of the fat is the good poly- and mono-unsaturated fats that lower bad cholesterol and raise good cholesterol.

A great alternative to mayonnaise is avocado. With a fourth of the calories per gram, the same kind of good fat and high amounts of Vitamins B1, B2, B3, B6, B9 and C, it is much better for you.

Combine with some lemon juice, salt and pepper and you have a sandwich spread to end all sandwich spreads.

### The Sauce:

While ketchup might have been a vegetable in the '80s, nowadays it has more sugar per gram than most sodas. Skip it and try some hot Dijon mustard. It'll add a ton

of flavor, almost no calories, and even a little bit of a spicy kick.

*"If you're getting a sandwich at Wendy's, you might as well learn how to make your own and save some money."*

*-Charles Lam, sandwich expert*

### The Veggie:

When putting vegetables in sandwiches, there are two stand-

outs: tomatoes and spinach. Tomatoes are the super star of the health world.

They're high in antioxidants, repair cell damage and contain Vitamin A which is good for the eyes, and Vitamin C. Instead of lettuce, try using spinach as a green leafy vegetable. High in Vitamins A, B1-6, C, E, K Omega-3 fatty acids and iron, spinach is an easy way to introduce nutritional value to your diet.

### The Meat:

Cheap burger places use pretty cheap meat for their patties. They are typically high in fat and the patties can be around 250 calories per quarter pound. Any kind of sandwich meat you can get at the grocery store has more protein

to build muscle with. Switch it up between ham, turkey, balogna, roast beef or whatever else for some variety.

### The Cheese:

Now that you get to pick your own cheese, have some fun. No more American slices; instead, try spicing things up with some pepper jack or sharp cheddar. While you'll actually get fewer calories from fast food "cheese products," you will be getting much more flavor and much more calcium.

### The Extras:

You've got a great sandwich in front of you and you still want a little extra? Fine. Try some cherries or watermelon on the side. Both are in season, good for you, and tasty.

If you're craving something a little less healthy, stick some bacon in the sandwich. If you want something salty, pistachios, though work-intensive, are super tasty. As for drinks, try some lemonade or unsweetened tea, it'll pair much better than soda.

With just a little planning you can put together a sandwich that will blow away any fast food burger, no matter whether you are counting calories, nutrition, cost or taste.

Make a good enough sandwich, and you'll never go back to eating out for lunch. Remember, don't be afraid of the salt and pepper and don't be afraid to try something you think will be tasty. You'll be healthier and happier.

As an anonymous proverb once said, "Life is like a sandwich, the more you add to it, the better it becomes."

# Will You Be My Best Friend Again?

By Monica Luhar  
Staff Writer

As I looked through some old boxes in my garage, I found a letter from my former best friend (let's call her Minnie). The dog-eared letter had survived years of neglect in a cardboard box filled with cobwebs and dust.

Despite the spelling errors and the misuse of "accepted," the twelve-year-old letter had me giggling with happiness. The bright yellow imprints along the edges of the letter reminded me of the times when my best friend and I were obsessed with sending each other different types of stationery.

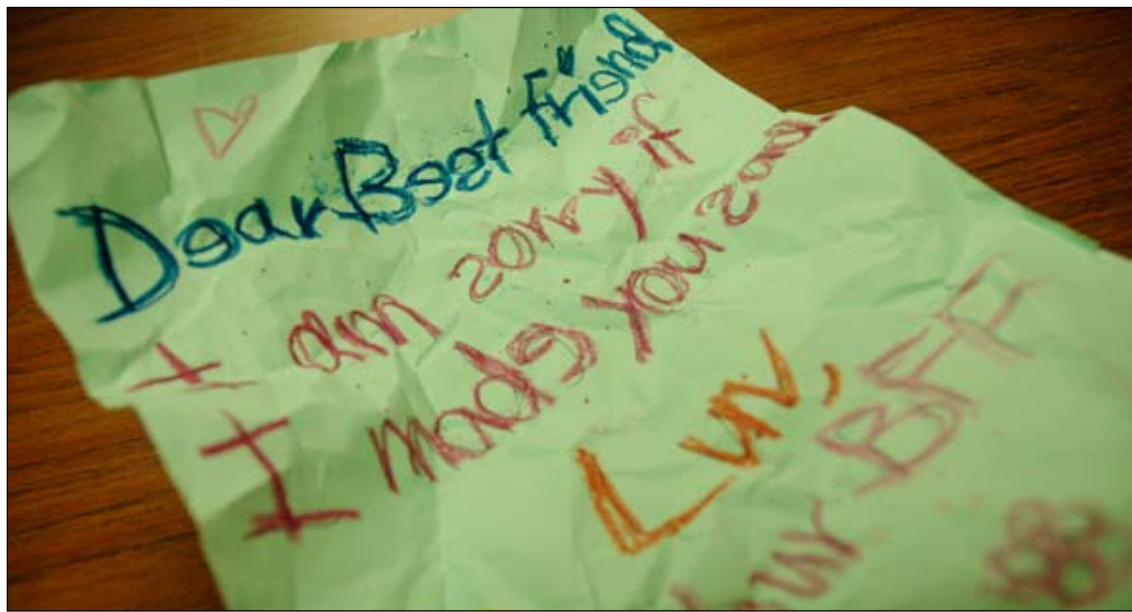
Minnie wrote: "I am really sorry about before. Apology excepted? Tell me if you will be my BFF agian and if my apology is excepted [sic] below."

The lonely blank box waited for my approval so that Minnie and I could be best friends forever again. I wrote the words: "YES. I will be your B.F.F." in the box provided.

I was glad that I picked up such a significant piece of history from my childhood. It dawned on me that my pre-teen years were filled with an innocent understanding of friendship.

One minute, Minnie and I would be playing on the swing set, the other moment we'd be arguing over who would play Aladdin and Princess Jasmine.

We'd get into arguments and give each other the silent treatment for a good five minutes. But things would always be better again. We'd find



NIKKI JEE | Staff Photographer

Artist and copy editor Mallory Yu depicts a representation of a childhood letter of a heartfelt apology.

some way to laugh or giggle about our stupid little arguments. We'd go back to playing "dress up" or pretend we were editors at a fashion magazine entitled, "Girl's Life."

My life would have been void and dull without Minnie. She was like a big sister to me. She stood up to me when pre-school bullies came to demand their portion of the sandbox.

She even gave me my very own "Gothy doll" for my first birthday, which I still have to this day.

Gothy resembles Chuckie, decked in a horrible flower apron, and a wig that was replaced from Michael's arts and crafts store too many times to count. Her eyeballs can flip inside out, and her feet are

*"I am really sorry about before. Apology excepted? Tell me if you will be my BFF agian and if my apology is excepted [sic] below."*

*-Letter from former BFF*

raggedy and torn. She's aged more than me. But through the years, she was a reminder of the memories I had shared with Minnie. I remember hugging Gothy every time I felt like

I needed a hug from my big sister Minnie.

Things eventually changed though. Minnie stopped writing letters to me when she moved 30 minutes away. I could no longer bike to her house. I remember my mom driving past her old house one day, and reminiscing about the days Minnie and I chased her dog and ran across the sprinklers. The house suddenly seemed to haunt me. There were no kids, no dog, no laughter and no Minnie.

We went to separate elementary schools and Minnie became more involved in other activities and other friends. We suddenly lost contact.

Years later, she invited me to her sweet sixteen party. I knew it would

feel awkward because I hadn't seen her for such a long time. But I was eager to go. At her party, I looked at the young woman in front of me and realized that we had both changed so much over the years.

We didn't have time for slumber parties or makeovers anymore. It was time for us to grow up and bid our letter-writing days adieu. And that's what happened.

Needless to say, life wasn't as simple as I thought it would be. I came to the realization that we couldn't just write "apology" letters and slip it under the door, and suddenly become best friends again.

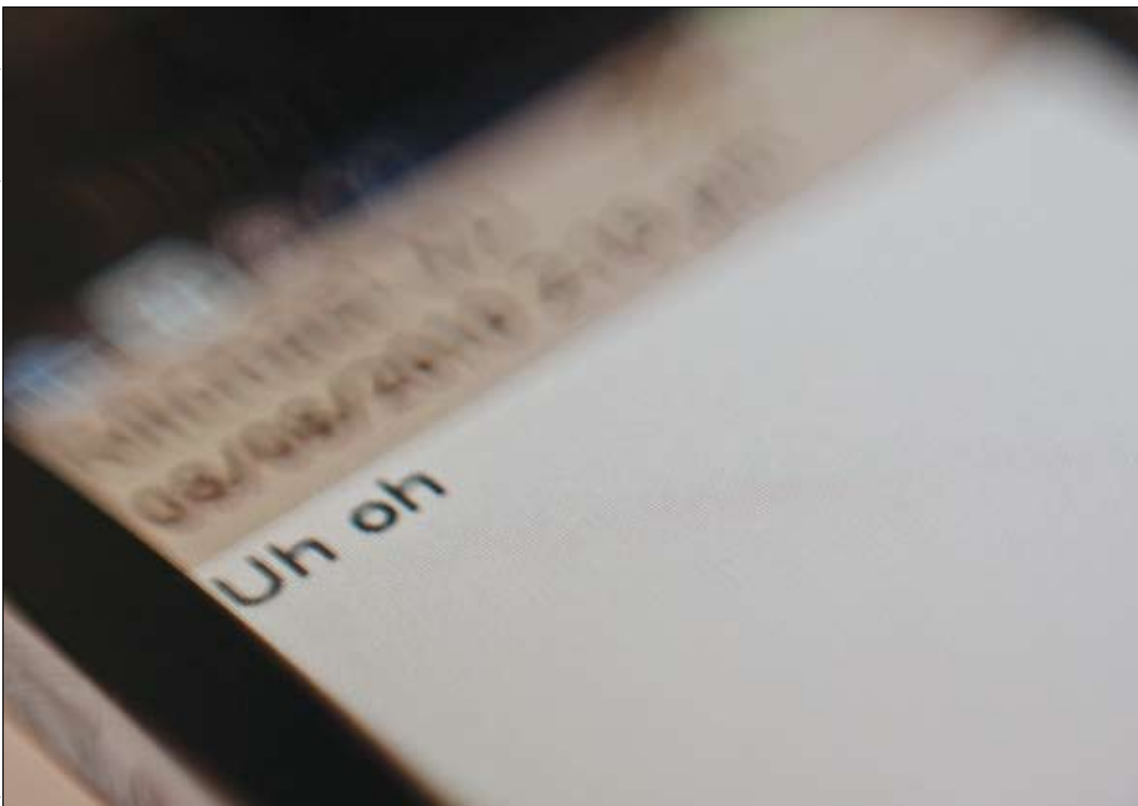
I didn't see Minnie much after her sweet sixteen. But we were unexpectedly reunited at the same college.

It was weird bumping into her again because I knew how we often joked about how we'd always be best friends and that we'd call each other when we got accepted to the same college, and that we'd be roommates and find us some dashing twins to marry. I guess one out of three ain't bad.

The letter I had come across made me feel bittersweet. I now realize that I can't hold onto the past. My falling out with Minnie was part of our path to "growing up." I wanted to childishly believe that we could be best friends forever, but that just never came to be.

I'm thankful for the memories, and glad that a simple letter reminded me of the good times I had shared with Minnie. As cheesy as it sounds, I'll always keep the letter. Who knows, I'll probably hide it in a time capsule or something.

# OMFG WTF: Texting Gone Wrong



NICK VU | Staff Photographer

Check your outbox. You might have sent the wrong text to someone who wasn't supposed to receive it.

By Christina Lam

We may prefer e-mails to phone calls and online articles to paper books in libraries, but nothing can replace a face-to-face conversation.

Technology has done its job and connected us to each other worldwide, for better or for worse. People are able to keep in touch with friends through social networking sites. It may be a shallow friendship, but who doesn't smile a

little when someone posts on your Facebook wall by simply saying, "Hey, how's your summer going?"

Sometimes, it takes that one person who's known you since elementary school to keep you sane through the failed classes, lack of job offers and break-ups.

It certainly helps to know they're just a "send" button away. Sometimes it helps to vent on your blog or Tumblr, not because you seek attention, but because it's comforting to know that maybe someone out there reading it has

felt the same way you do.

Sometimes when you're lonely, it's nice to look at your AIM buddy list and know you're not alone.

Last Saturday night I checked my phone and found that my roommate sent me a text: "OMG my roommate was being so loud tonight and I couldn't sleep!"

I paused as I got into bed and my stomach squirmed a little bit. Even though we were in rooms next door to each other, and technically are just "apartment mates," I knew that the roommate being referred to in

the text message was me.

It was just the two of us in our apartment that night. Earlier before, I was a little louder than usual when a couple of my friends came over to visit, but I had never before been called out for being a "bad roommate" and it hurt a little.

I assumed it was a text meant to be sent to someone else, unless it was some kind of passive-aggressive way to ask me to shut up, and now I had the awkward choice of whether or not to respond.

I flipped out the keyboard of my cell and typed, "OMG I think my roommate accidentally texted me, complaining about how we were too loud tonight!" I double-checked my outbox to make sure I sent it to the right person.

As much as technology feeds into our need for contact, it can also increase our anti-social tendencies as well.

I probably should have apologized face-to-face to my roommate the next day but instead neither of us ever acknowledged the incident. It seems people use electronic communication as a way to avoid confrontation or uncomfortable conversations.

A friend's roommate recently told her through e-mail she was moving out in a week because she was tired of living in their apartment. Another friend of mine was

once asked out through Twitter.

Avoiding potential unpleasantness, however, is something we do as people – not as people addicted to technology. Technology only makes it possible.

It is a bit disconcerting to see that Facebook has more than 400 million active users and 50 percent of those people log onto Facebook each day (and yes, I found that

information by a quick Google search).

But remember that we survived every pop culture phenomenon to grip our minds and souls so far. We'll survive this one too. Once I see birth rates dropping because people refuse to leave their house, I'll start to worry.

Technology

changes the way we interact with others. It also causes people to become lonely and anti-social. E-mail substitutes for letters while instant messaging supplements phone calls. Just because communication has become faster and more convenient doesn't make it worse.

While on the surface it may seem cold and impersonal, typed text doesn't actually make the sentiment behind a note any less sincere than something handwritten. Though we may hide behind text messaging every now and then, people know that if you don't get out there in the physical world enough, it'll keep going on without you.

*"Last Saturday night I checked my phone and found that my roommate sent me a text: 'OMG my roommate was being so loud tonight and I couldn't sleep!'"*

*-Christina Lam*