

# ARGUMENTS

Missives: March-April 2019

by

Lilith

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Is it just a coincidence that soon after I spoke of the flaws of a one-party state, funding for my counselling sessions was cut, and now I have no affordable place to turn to for my mental health? What happens to those of us *against a one-party state* who can't afford a \$250/session therapist? That's how much my counsellor costs in private practice.

—*Ravings of a Madwoman*, Lilith

Date: Mon, 18 Mar 2019 at 9:50 AM

Lilith to J:

All work aside, now that I don't have a counsellor as my other interactive outlet, my dependence on you causes me some worry.

It's unhealthy. And I don't like that our relationship is so...imbalanced.

Date: Mon, 18 Mar 2019 at 2:07 PM

J to Lilith:

balance finds its own way ... in its own time ...

Date: Tue, 19 Mar 2019 at 10:25 PM

Lilith to J:

Well, whatever you say, I'm stuck with you now. Lilith is yours, because she's too traumatised to search anywhere else.

Only, I'm worried about the possibility of it affecting you negatively.

Does that freak you out?

Date: Wed, 20 Mar 2019 at 8:08 AM

J to Lilith:

mmm i certainly have no worries — or concerns really — about so-called negative associations ... never really did bother about what others thought about what i do, or who i associate myself with ...

Date: Wed, 20 Mar 2019 at 7:38 PM

Lilith to J:

Thank you for being so unwavering and by my side, J...

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I've noticed an amusing little trend of you disagreeing with me on things that you actually weren't disagreeing with; in disagreeing with me, you were actually agreeing more! It's funny and frustrating at the same time.

And also a little bit serious. *The personal is the political* is one area that I'm giving a bit more thought at the moment. You had no idea then that I have a union-influenced understanding of "the personal is the political" (it already has been for a long long time, patriarchal bastards made it so for aeons, we have to *respond*). You thought I was coming from a fascist position!

I do think Singaporeans by and large, activists included, don't have a very good understanding of *the personal is the political*, and how to turn that around. They, in the words of one senior friend, do not have the "political intellect".

On a personal level, there is some paranoia... (what I see as) disagreeing for the sake of it triggers past memories of men who at first got along with me so swimmingly, then suddenly some stupid disagreement-that-isn't-actually-a-disagreement comes up and suddenly we're not talking anymore.

When this happens between us, it's like *oh FFS...history repeats...*

And I do fear losing you. I hate this position I'm in.

Date: Thu, 21 Mar 2019 at 1:47 AM

J to Lilith:

' ... debate does not necessarily take the form of a disagreement; it can yield a more complex disimplication or displacement ... '  
(jacques derrida)

Date: Thu, 21 Mar 2019 at 1:52 AM

Lilith to J:

You shit-stirrer, you x

Well, I do thank you for keeping me company...and for occasionally starting shit with me. Brings me back to that time with B when I wanted to slap him and sit on his face at the same time.

## THE PERSONAL IS THE POLITICAL

*If you're not turned on to politics, politics will turn on you.*  
—Ralph Nader

Date: Fri, 22 Mar 2019 at 1:05 PM

Lilith to J:

J, I remember in one of your writings you gave attention to *The Emperor's New Clothes*, and people silencing the child who points out that the emperor is naked... I'm looking for the bit with the child...

Could you point it to me please?

Date: Fri, 22 Mar 2019 at 2:24 PM

J to Lilith:

hmmm, i don't think i've ever written extensively -- at least directly -- on *the emperor's new clothes*, and have always mentioned it in passing: the point has always been that

"it's not so much that a child might be able to shatter the illusion and thus had to be told to shut up, but a much worse situation: the illusion itself has already been shattered and it is the rest of us who are holding it together."

Date: Fri, 22 Mar 2019 at 2:40 PM

Lilith to J:

Well, this is bollocks now:

The importance of keeping up appearances is appreciated fully by the incumbent party in Singapore, which is why any party member who is deemed to have transgressed (no matter how irrelevant the transgression in relation to their job-scope or role as a politician) is made to resign. Take, for example, the recent scandal involving the then Speaker of Parliament, Michael Palmer. After admitting to an extra marital affair, Palmer resigned both from his role as Speaker and also as a Member of Parliament, even though the affair had nothing to do with his actual roles, nor his abilities to perform them.

—*An Essay On What It Is to Be a Leader*, Jeremy Fernando, 2013

How many gross transgressions have occurred, across how many ministries—related to their job-scope to boot—and how many of those fuck-ups are still in power?

Date: Fri, 22 Mar 2019 at 2:43 PM

J to Lilith:

the question is always:

what is deemed a transgression and *who gets to decide ...*

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Date: Fri, Mon, 11 Mar 2019 at 10:19 PM

Lilith to J:

I am reminded of a conversation I had with a resident I'd just met at that shithole they call a mental health rehabilitation centre.

She brought up the issue of boyfriends, because she had one and I didn't.

"Eh I can introduce you to someone. He works in (I forgot where she said) and has \$10k in the bank."

I just looked at her and laughed like, "WTF? Why would you think I'd be into that? And that's your idea of an eligible bachelor? Money is in the equation? And \$10k is a lot to you?" No, no, I didn't say any of those things to her. I just said I'm not into that, and am happy by myself right now. I'm giggling now thinking about that moment.

Women all over the world marry for money and security...because society pressures that a woman cannot survive without a man. I have felt that pressure...but I think I have shown that I would rather be incarcerated by the state than "marry a rich man can already" (what my mother wanted for me, even though he was psycho). Teehee!

And that young woman...she was of the "marry to get a government flat" mentality. One might think that's understandable, because the rehab centre is a hellhole, and she comes from a broken family, so she has nowhere else to go. Marriage to a controlling waiter would be her way out. I hope she's earning a decent wage as an optician's assistant now, after graduating from ITE<sup>1</sup>.

She doesn't have the strength of personality and character that I have. Her self-worth is tied to whether she has a partner or not. And that is perpetuated by the culture she is from. If she doesn't have a boyfriend/husband, the sorts of jobs a woman with her qualifications will land in certainly won't help her self-worth (have I not been in enough of those ;)). Not just because of the nature of the job, but because of her *colleagues*. And let's not forget that she is diagnosed...the cycle she is in is very vicious.

Because of her background, she'll either be stuck for life in a marriage riddled with suffering, or divorced and forced to wait in a women's shelter for six months to a year, or even two, while waiting for government approval of her 2-room flat.

I would know. I fucking lived in a women's shelter for a time. Got to know women from all sorts of backgrounds, multiple nationalities, different mental states.

That vicious cycle is avoidable, you know... if only our society were less judgemental, more understanding.

That young woman has been conditioned by those around her to think within the box. And once you're in the mental health system, you are conditioned to think it knows everything better than you do. You listen and do as you are told, or be labelled "non-compliant".

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<sup>1</sup> Institute of Technical Education

That is what the medical social worker threatened me with when I refused to show my condo tenancy contract, after she fucked up in processing my financial assistance claim—she completely overlooked my case for six months, by which time I'd already found that condo to live in. And they judged my financial status based on where I was living after so long. I was like, I'm still in an unstable position, the rent is actually similar to that shithole's, and *where were you when I needed the financial assistance six months ago.*

I knew she judged me right from the start. When I first met her, she frowned at me like I was some kind of weird specimen. Probably believed my parents. When I asked to see another medical social worker, she told me, "But I'm the only one."

Imagine, J, that is the environment from which I come...

A senior friend said to me, "I don't know the other girls in the office because I don't talk to them—there's nothing to talk about with them. I don't have lunch with any of the employees in the office. You're very different."

When the "office ladies" ask me what my plans are, the answer flies right over their heads...

Grrrrrrr...

Date: Tue, 12 Mar 2019 at 9:45 AM

J to Lilith:

mmm i'll readily acknowledge that i've been very lucky ... and have (goodness knows how) run into people that i'm able to have conversations with, some within Singapore, and some elsewhere ... who knows how this has happened, but i'm very thankful that it has, and don't ever want to take that for granted ...

as for the strategies of people (for instance, marrying for money), i've never quite been sure what my position on that is : personally, it's not the path that i'd take, but -- at the very same time -- it is a viable strategy (and for some, perhaps one of the few that are open to them at that given point), so as long as they go in with their eyes open (like i'm going to guess Melania Trump has ... ) then well played i guess ...

after all, who's to say there is only one path in life ...

## SOCIAL MOBILITY

*YOU TRYING TO TIRE ME?*

—Rage  
Against  
the Machine

Date: Tue, 12 Mar 2019 at 4:25 PM

Lilith to J:

I'll go out on a limb and say it's because of the environment you grew up in, the opportunities you were exposed to. It gives you the energy, the capacity to form and maintain such connections, such friendships...and let's not forget that they might judge you based on your family background too.

I mean, what if you went to the same schools, worked in the same places you did, but came from a completely different sort of family. For people like me, my energy is split having to fight this and that...within and without myself. When I was in primary school, the parents of one girl I got along very well with, who lived in a maisonette, told her not to hang out with me, and that was that.

That, along with the attachment styles a child develops to cope with what sort of parents s/he has... I've had my own ambivalent attachment tendencies to unlearn/manage.

I overheard a relative of my landlady saying he wants to put his grandson in a certain school because of the contacts he would have—not just child to child, but parent to parent.

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As for using a boyfriend/husband to get ahead... I've unintentionally found myself on that path a couple of times. Both my serious relationships were with blokes from well-to-do families.

The second one, I moved in with. That was my escape—once out of my family home, it put me in the frame of mind to commence a distance degree. After one year, just for the heck of it, I applied to complete the rest of it in Melbourne. I did not expect that my application would be successful. It's a combination of frustration, luck and having the mind to spot the opportunity: Someone gave me the idea to further in Melbourne; when I hesitated, she said, *mai tu liao*<sup>2</sup>. Don't think, just do.

But my relationship did not survive the move, even though he went with me. I changed, grew, much quicker than he (and his parents) could handle. He was an ITE graduate—they couldn't handle him marrying that far up. Um yeah, we married. And parental pressure can kill.

After that, I was wary of being in that sort of position again. I'm not the sort to compromise my soul, and it's not fair on the guy who gets with me at, say, this point in my life where I'm kind of nowhere... If he's supportive, great, but the test is how will he take the possibility of me outgrowing him, like I did my ex-husband.

And parents, man, parents... thanks to the previous two relationships, I think I'm phobic of meeting other people's parents. I'd dread conversations with them, because of my background and expectations they'd have of me :/ And because I'm *feminist*.

With my ex-husband, I thought we would be comfortable where we were forever. I thought: complete the degree, return to Singapore, find a job, set up a home with him. I never thought living in Melbourne would be so *perspective-altering*.

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<sup>2</sup> "Don't delay" in Hokkien

But I had a lot of skeletons to work through. At least at some point I had the wisdom to see that. But when I decided to hunker down and deal with those skeletons...well, it's given rise to my story, has it not?

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From where I came... should I stop dreaming? Should I not have dreams? Should I stop striving? Should I not strive? I am, after all, just one woman. At the women's shelter, I was told by the shelter president about a common sentiment in his circle that those in my position wouldn't rise more than three steps above their situation—more than three steps above my position then.

—*Ravings of a Madwoman*, Lilith

A senior friend, when I told him about what the shelter president said, he replied: “But that's true. There's no social mobility in Singapore. In the UK, someone from a disadvantaged background can work their way up to become Minister. In Singapore, never. If you're not in some sort of network, connected to certain people, forget it.”

Can somebody *please* prove him wrong...

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And I think the well-played award ought to go to Dita von Teese, who no one knew about until she married Marilyn Manson. And then divorced him so quickly after and became a symbol of empowerment for a not insignificant number of women...

Date: Tue, 12 Mar 2019 at 5:58 PM

J to Lilith:

mmm Dita von Teese would certainly be well deserving of that *well played* award ...

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you're certainly right about the combination of where we've gone to, the luck of the hand we've been dealt (no one can choose where they are born, to whom they've been born to), and in those respects, i've been really lucky. i do wish though that your friend were still right: unfortunately, social mobility in the UK is decreasing as well ... like it is around the world : until the 1980s it was pretty decent here, but -- like in a lot of places -- *class* has come back into the picture ...

and one sees it playing out in many places, in many facets of life ...

not just in obvious positions of power (like politics, big business), but in most every aspect of life ... academia, for instance, is one of the most *class rife* places (and terribly dishonest about it too ... it plays out especially through the discourse of *pedigree*, both by way of the classic *which school one went to*, but also *which clubs are you a part of*—the latter being even more significant than the former ... )

/

the question of growth in relationships has always been an intriguing one: in many ways, both (assuming there are two) persons in any relationship grow ... the question is just *in what way* and (perhaps more pertinently) *is the growth compatible to that relationship* (the sad thing happens when both grow in ways that are individually great for them, but tragic for the relationship ... but then again, there is no reason why there isn't a *time to relationships* too ... )

Date: Tue, 12 Mar 2019 at 6:33 PM  
Lilith to J:

Well, so he's still right about one thing—there is no social mobility in Singapore. I think that's the important point here, because I couldn't care less about other places being worse or better. (And he wasn't discounting the fact that social mobility is decreasing, generally.)

The point is, one still can be from a disadvantaged background in other developed countries and be in government. Post-2000s: In the UK, a trans woman from a dysfunctional family became Member of Parliament; in Australia, an ABC journalist became Parliamentary Secretary; and what's the New Zealand Prime Minister's name...it's a good thing that I've forgotten it, actually! Because she's a woman. And her husband is so *ordinary*. All the examples I've cited are women. Women going into politics should be so common we can't even remember their names.

Not in Singapore. He's right about this: *not in Singapore*.

I don't care that it is decreasing/also non-existent elsewhere. Have I mentioned that "it's also happening elsewhere" is a pointless distraction that doesn't contribute to solving the problem? And the fact that I have the knowledge to point out that social mobility is nada here shows that I have seen better social mobility elsewhere. There is a better situation to work towards.

Date: Tue, 12 Mar 2019 at 7:09 PM  
J to Lilith:

no, i wouldn't deny that there is always a better possibility to be working towards ... nor do i think that looking elsewhere (for better or for worse) is a distraction : comparisons are just that ... every situation is a singular one, and thus one has very little to do with the other ... that being said, if there is a greater trend (in this case the decrease of social mobility) then, there is also the possibility that something else is at play (i would suggest neoliberalism in this case ... )

Date: Tue, 12 Mar 2019 at 9:15 PM

Lilith to J:

Then it be a preference of mine to dislike hearing things along the lines of *same shit everywhere*. It is triggering because too often it's used an excuse to let things remain the same, to *let shit go*. So actually, "same shit everywhere" *is* used as a distraction.

And well, to hell with neoliberalism. Is that why I'm being hidden, being isolated?

And so fucking what if there is no social mobility? Is that a reason for me not to get ahead?

*As a rule, there is no social mobility in Singapore, so YOU SHALL NOT PASS.*

Date: Wed, 13 Mar 2019 at 8:38 PM

J to Lilith:

for better, or for worse (unfortunately, worse mostly ... ) we all depend on our networks, our connections, the people that we know, in order for things to happen ... the fantasy of the enlightenment (and, in some way, such a beautiful fantasy it was too) was that reason would lead the way, that decisions would be made on reason ... what they didn't quite account for, perhaps, was that reason itself isn't neutral, is itself premised on un-reason (the most basic one being human relation ... which is far from reasoned .... )





Date: Fri, 15 Mar 2019 at 8:22 AM

Lilith to J:

Another thought pops into my head from time to time... Is something else at play as to why I'm so isolated?

I remember things being a lot more open, more fluid in Melbourne.

Over there, the social justice circle I was in...it's common for strangers of a common cause to come together, with their shared ideals, and friendships might develop from that. But a common cause, not friendships, is the reason for coming together, for expanding, for being introduced to new people and things. That's just organic.

Here it's the complete fucking opposite, which is *bonkers*: it gives rise to the situation where one would have to make friends in order to get something. That turns interpersonal relationships into utilities! *I only want to be friends with you because I want something from you.* Urgh. It should be the other way around!

So when you expressed the idea that that I might view you/your friends as utilities...that exchange back then actually made me sick. Like, that's how things work here? Ew. I don't even know what friendship means anymore.

Date: Fri, 15 Mar 2019 at 2:02 PM

J to Lilith:

part of the problem, a major part of the issue, here is that there isn't the notion of *public* ... in many ways, Thatcher, Reagan, and Kuan Yew, are the same person: and they eroded the public in favour of the monetised private (by way of large corporations ... ) ... that's why solidarity is a missing thing here ...

Date: Fri, 15 Mar 2019 at 2:43 PM

Lilith to J:

I don't agree with putting the blame and responsibility on country leaders. Solidarity exists everywhere else, under all sorts of governments. Let's not even look at the developed west (which I think has more community among *individuals* than in Asia). In Myanmar/Burma, Cambodia, Hong Kong, Taiwan... I certainly see solidarity among them. More intensely than in the west.

Okay, so let's say there isn't solidarity here. *Why can't we change that.*

It's something to complain about, something that is being complained about.

I see so much talking but so little *doing*...

Date: Sat, 16 Mar 2019 at 9:11 AM

J to Lilith:

it's not so much blame as "Thatcher, Kuan Yew, Reagan" have become symbols (and shorthands) for particular systems of beliefs and thoughts ... and their particular influences on their respective countries (and really a lot of the world) is -- like them or not -- undeniable : one could really argue that without them, people like Putin would be impossible (for he is not a 20th century styled dictator but a 21st century version; in which economics plays a much more major role ... )

Date: Sat, 16 Mar 2019 at 9:55 AM

Lilith to J:

Keeping the focus on solidarity—whatever systems exist wherever, doesn't change the fact that solidarity exists everywhere else, from the harshest regime to the most peaceful, orderly nation, as opposed to here.

Cherian George gives that attention in *Singapore Incomplete*:

Like many First World societies, Singaporeans don't feel a pressing need to overthrow an unjust system. But other rich countries are much more tolerant of protest than Singapore. Their people have more rights to dissent, so they express their views more readily. Local governments even facilitate demonstrations as legitimate acts of political participation, providing extra bus and metro services for major rallies. Conscientious Japanese citizens don't need to think twice before organising a march against the slaughter of dolphins and whales through a shopping street. Their Singaporean counterparts, on the other hand, would not dare stray beyond the confines of Speaker's Corner, and even then wonder if there might be repercussions later.

Like dozens of other authoritarian states, Singapore has powerful disincentives against political protest. But most of those other countries also give their citizens compelling reasons to swallow the cost, and protest anyway. Gross economic management, rampant corruption, massive social injustice and brutal violations against human rights push citizens to the brink. Protesters are willing to be arrested and beaten up because, really, what do they have to lose?

/

I don't mean to suggest that street protests are always a good thing or that we necessarily need to be worried if our weekend traffic isn't diverted by the occasional big demonstration, the way it is in Delhi, Hong Kong and Jakarta. But Singapore's relative lack of protest is certainly intriguing. And

it is a symptom of a larger and possibly more worrying phenomenon, which is the public's political passivity. It's not just that people don't wave placards on the street. It also appears that Singaporeans are also highly inert when it comes to other forms of political participation, including through officially approved channels and forums.

This is troubling, because an active citizenry, as the government's own articulation of Singapore's core values acknowledges, is vital for the country. Without it, we are just a shopping mall or a hotel, a place to pursue private interests, as opposed to a nation we build together. We should be grateful that we have less reason to protest than countries where life is much more difficult. But we should be concerned about a political system with such strong disincentives to dissent. This produces a culture that automatically leaves public affairs to politicians and paid officials while the rest of us focus on our own families, work, leisure and lifestyle. This may not seem like a problem when things go smoothly, but it won't be enough when we need to rise together to meet bigger challenges. At such times, we need people to be as engaged by public conscience as by private consumption.

Things fucking up all over Singapore now ought to be good enough incentive for Singaporeans to wake the fuck up and start being politically active citizens.

Let not the systems of government distract us from the fact that we need to do something about ourselves, because solidarity exists across all, and we are the idiotic exception.

I'll go listen to Rage Against The Machine's *Wake Up*, now...

## Rage Against the Machine

### *Wake Up*

Although you try to discredit  
You still never edit  
The needle, I'll thread it  
Radically poetic  
Standin' with the fury that they had in '66  
And like E-Double I'm mad  
Still knee-deep in the system's shit  
Hoover, he was a body remover  
I'll give you a dose  
But it can never come close  
To the rage built up inside of me  
Fist in the air in the land of hypocrisy

Movements come and movements go  
Leaders speak, movements cease  
When their heads are flown  
'Cause all these punks  
Got bullets in their heads  
Departments of police, the judges, the feds  
Networks at work, keepin' people calm  
You know they went after King  
When he spoke out on Vietnam  
He turned the power to the have-nots  
And then came the shot

Yeah, back in this...  
With poetry, my mind I flex  
Flip like Wilson, vocals never lackin' that  
finesse  
What do I got to, what do I got to do to wake  
you up  
To shake you up, to break the structure up  
'Cause blood still flows in the gutter  
I'm like takin' photos  
Mad boy kicks open the shutter  
Set the groove  
Then stick and move like I was Cassius  
Rep the stutter step  
Then bomb a left upon the fascists  
Yeah, the several federal men  
Who pulled schemes on the dream  
And put it to an end  
You better beware of retribution with mind war  
20/20 visions and murals with metaphors  
Networks at work, keepin' people calm

You know they murdered X  
And tried to blame it on Islam

He turned the power to the have-nots  
And then came the shot

What was the price on his head?  
What was the price on his head!

I think I heard a shot  
I think I heard a shot  
I think I heard a shot  
I think I heard a shot  
I think I heard a shot  
I think I heard, I think I heard a shot

'He may be a real contender for this position  
should he abandon his supposed obedience to  
white liberal doctrine of non-violence...and  
embrace black nationalism.  
Through counter-intelligence it should be  
possible to pinpoint potential trouble-  
makers...and neutralise them, and  
neutralise them, and neutralise them.'

Wake up! Wake up! Wake up! Wake up!  
Wake up! Wake up! Wake up! Wake up!

How long? Not long, 'cause what you reap is  
what you sow



Date: Fri, 19 Apr 2019 at 1:50 AM

Lilith to J:

I thought I'd go to the beach tonight, thinking  
I want to look up at the sky and ask for things  
But when I looked up, I forgot everything  
I was in awe...what was it I wanted again?

The sky does glitter tonight. And the full moon, so bright.

If one were to believe in callings and shit like that, there could be a karmic lesson in the fact that I have no one and nothing to distract me from you. I don't think you see it as well as I do. Or do you? All the material you showed me after you'd read *Do You Know Why You're Here?*—my story after its first iteration—showed me what you saw, and understand.

I only live once...

What did I not-die for...

You are my one and only audience now. So to you, my memories I must tell...

I should start with one about a jealous Cambodian bar girl named L, who doubled as housekeeper at the bar/hostel that I first stayed in... (I'm neutral towards bar-girling as a profession, mind. But that *jealousCambodianbargirl...*)

No, no, we should look first at what she observed from behind the bar; maybe that will put her jealousy in context...

\*\*\*

I was sitting at the bar wearing a top that showed my upper back and shoulders, and a Frenchman, French language teacher he was, decided to pull at the back to peek down.

"Don't touch me," I snapped at him, sitting back abruptly to close that gap. Too bad the back of the chair wasn't high enough so I could crush his fingers...

I remember him gesticulating, in that French accent of his, "In my culture, it is acceptable to do like that."

"In my culture, you are supposed to respect a woman," I snapped back.

Then he raises his voice at me—"No, in here, you respect *my* culture."

"OKAY, IT'S *HER* CULTURE." Took a lesbian white Scottish woman stepping between us to stop it from escalating further. I was about to yell at him.

The hierarchy of race and gender in Cambodia. The hierarchy of race and gender anywhere in the world...

The Scot said to me, about the hierarchy in Cambodia. If I were a white woman, there would be no fight. The Cambodian girls would leave me alone.

However, because I am Singaporean—Asian Asian, educated, and *western*, I am their competition for men.

“The girls, they’re talking about you...” she’d said to me in a sing-song way.

I crashed on her couch the first time B and I broke up. Gave me a pack of cigarettes and said, “I give you 24 hours to grieve.”

After 24 hours passed, we were at a friend’s coffeeshop for dinner. I started wailing something about him but was cut short within seconds by a toothpick she stabbed my thigh with. It bled!

Gave me something else to grieve about. As compensation though, she taught me how to punch.

The way L bitched to her friends over the phone (it was very obvious it was about me, the way she gave me the evil side eye, her Khmer littered with “bitch”)... And the way F’s wife looked at me after 2-3 days... I was proper paranoid someone would poison me towards the end of my stay in Cambodia.

But L was nice at first, you know. They all are. She, like the rest, wanted to get to know me because they wanted things from me.

Like another pretty young Cambodian woman an old Irish guy bragged about having “plucked her out of a village. She didn’t speak a word of English before I met her.” Within half an hour of meeting me, she said, “I like you. I want to do business with you.”

Maybe the forwardness (desperation?) of those Cambodian women (and even B) rubbed off on me, the way I push for collaborations here...

These Cambodians who wanted things from me... don’t they know that the foreigners who end up there are lacking, too?





A white supremacist gang poster  
Phnom Penh, Cambodia  
January 3, 2015